WELL, WHY NOT?

THOMAS
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MASSON

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WELL, WHY NOT?

Books by Thomas L. Masson

A BACHELOR'S BABY, AND SOME GROWN-UPS

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BEST STORIES IN THE WORLD

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IN MERRY MEASURE

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NEW PLATO; OR, SOCRATES REDIVIVUS

THE VON BLUMERS

WELL, WHY NOT?

YANKEE NAVY

WELL, WHY NOT?

BY

THOMAS L. MASSON

GARDEN CITY, N. Y., AND TORONTO
DOUBLEDAY, PAGE & COMPANY
1921

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PROLOGUE TO FOREWORD

No BOOK that essays to call itself a book is complete nowadays without either a Foreword or a Preface. Not being able to secure a writer of sufficient merit to write either, the task necessarily falls to the author. The Foreword that follows is, therefore, a masterpiece of general intelligence and superabundant wit. It is one of the best Forewords yet presented to the Public.

FOREWORD TO INTRODUCTION TO PREFACE

Heretofore all Forewords have stood alone. Their difficulty, of course, is in the fact that nothing lies between them and the contents. No sooner has the reader skipped the Foreword than he is obliged to read the book. In this, our book, however, the reader is led so gradually into the contents that he hardly minds when he is there. But in addition to giving you so much for your money by providing a Prologue, an Introduction, and a Preface—something apparently that no author has hitherto thought of in the Introduction to the Preface that follows, the

author has availed himself of the privilege of originality by providing an entirely new style of Introduction. In most Introductions, the author includes all the ideas he has in the book, writing them over again, probably upon the assumption that, as nobody ever reads an "Introduction," he is quite safe in giving away beforehand all the book contains. The Introduction that follows is above all this. It is guaranteed not to disclose the slightest inkling of what is in the book.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PREFACE

It ought to be quite plain now, even to any handsome person of average unintelligence, that the author of this book knows his business better than any other author now in typographical captivity. Every common author writes a preface (or gets someone else to do it for him), a Foreword, or an Introduction. But the present author, several years ahead of his age, has provided them all—and more—for he has not only begun with a Prologue, but he is quite likely to wind up with "A Few Remarks." This being incontestably true, the next thing in order is the

PREFACE

The idea of a Preface is to exhaust the reader before the book itself is reached, provided it is read,

which it rarely is. To do this the author must not only give a history of his life, but must tell how he came to write the book and his motives in inflicting it upon an always expectant (and generally disappointed) public. Then he must express his thanks to all those who, having read the book, have secretly advised him not to issue it while loudly proclaiming its epoch-making qualities. The present author, however, is seeking the gratitude of the public, so he refuses to do all these things, except to say that thanks are due to an expensive electric fan that provided him with reasonable fresh air while writing it; to four typewriter ribbons that furnished the ink and inspiration, to certain vulgar creditors who, without knowing it, spurred him on, and to an innocent publisher who knew no better than to think he could get his money back. But——

P. S.

A great fear has come over the present author that unless some outside person of distinguished ability can be induced to write something favorable about the book, the public will feel cheated out of its just dues and will therefore refuse to read it. As already hinted, no literary celebrity could ever be induced to read the book, let alone write anything complimentary about it. Not that it is necessary

to read a book in order to write about it. But while several celebrities have been approached, the answer was always the same. The author was not the kind of an author who would write anything that any conscientious celebrity could introduce. He was over twelve years of age. That barred out Mr. Barrie. He had never done anything else—such as robbing other people of a couple of hundred millions, throwing a baby down a well, starting a new religion, inventing a new diet, or running for President—which would entitle him to the privilege of writing upon any subject of which he knew nothing. This being so, he was in despair until—out of a clear kitchen sky—a martyr appeared who offered her services. The few Remarks that follow, therefore—properly introducing the readers who may now be left—were written (as the author firmly believes) by the only Perfect Lady Cook.

A FEW REMARKS

The author of this book is personally known to the writer of these lines as one who eats regularly three meals a day, and as many more as he can get, and who frequently robs the refrigerator at midnight, drinking up all the milk left in the remaining bottle, and almost invariably leaving both doors open. There have been moments when he appeared to have

a good disposition, but this was immediately after meals, and did not last. Also, he gets up in the middle of the night in search of what he terms ideas, the only result, however, being to disarrange the furniture and not infrequently to do it damage. He was never known to put any article back in its place and has never learned how to take care of himself. When it rains, his raincoat and umbrella are always somewhere else; and in summer his bathing suit, and in winter his overshoes, are never where he is ready to take oath he put them the season before. On the approach of any burglar he cowers in bed, with the sheets over his head. He cannot be trusted to mind a baby for fifteen minutes without endangering its life. His eyesight and memory are fast failing him and he cannot remember the face or name of any woman, even if she has spent a week-end in his home, for more than a few hours. He once tried to make out an income tax report and was only saved from a term of imprisonment and a heavy fine by two lawyers and the president of his local bank. His judgment in all business matters is wretched, and if given more than ten dollars at a time he squanders them in hard gum drops (which always disagree with him), in second-hand golf balls, and in moving picture shows. He has never learned how to put the studs in a dress shirt. His knowledge of politics, history, literature, art, and music is all quite vague

and uncertain, his inaccuracy being so proverbial that when he makes a prediction on any subject, the exact opposite is certain to occur. He is full of conceit and frequently so absent-minded and rude in his manner that apologies have to be privately offered for him. He cannot drive a nail, lock a door properly, allows women to put on new tires, and does not even know how to replace an electric bulb. In fact, his ignorance is only exceeded by his vanity. His book, therefore, ought to be a great success. Well, Why Not?

THE ONLY PERFECT COOK.

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WELL, WHY NOT?

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PERSONAL PRONOUN IN LITERATURE

THE receipt for being a professional humourist—according to some gentlemen—is solely to write about oneself. It is a simple plan. The most comic person in the world is oneself. Furthermore, oneself is always on hand. Your habits, your peculiarities—which you discreetly cultivate for commercial purposes—are immediately accessible, as a kind of stock-in-trade which may be drawn upon at will. Moreover, it is the easiest way and in these days of ardent competition, the easiest way is the one that yields the largest immediate profits. Thus we have a whole school of writers who acquire families apparently only for the purpose of exploiting them. The baby must pay for himself. The growing boy, in the absence of his being himself a literary prodigy—for even in the family of a genius it is not to be expected that all of the offspring will inherit from their father—must do his vicarious bit. In

these days, if you would be a writer of distinction, you have but to expose yourself to your eager public without shame and without remorse. What you had for breakfast, how you stumbled downstairs on your way to your sanctum, what you wear—all this and more is grist for your mill.

The public is vaguely tolerant, because the public battens on personalities, and in the main, what does it matter whether a man writes about himself or someone else? And the American public, which, because of its heterogeneous quality, lacks a standard of taste in its literature, has been trained to accept this sort of thing. When Bill Nye broke his leg, he welcomed it as a godsend; it gave him, as he frankly avowed, something new to write about. The manager of an American lecture bureau was frankly puzzled for some years to know how to get the most out of the British celebrities he brought over here. He discovered the secret in a flash of racial inspiration.

"Gentlemen," his instructions read, "withhold your opinions; nobody here cares what these opinions are: they want to know about you; talk, therefore, about yourselves." The British celebrities obeyed, for even a British celebrity, strange as this may seem, is not above making money.

Then again, there are undoubtedly distinguished precedents. Wordsworth wrote about himself—

ingenuously and shamelessly. So did Rousseau. Cæsar's Commentaries were political documents in which he figured largely as the hero. Shakespeare's sonnets were all about himself. In reality, it is quite true that nobody writes except about himself. His characters may go under other names, but the villain is himself and the hero is himself. Macawber was Dickens and Dickens was Macawber. Bernard Shaw masquerades back of his characters with his tongue in his cheek, and you can always hear him moving the scenery about. Samuel Pepys, telling about his wife and his servants and his eczema, is one of the most delightful writers in literature. What, then, constitutes the difference? If Rousseau and Pepys exposed their frailties to a devoted posterity, why should Mr. Irvin Cobb be reluctant to explain how homely he is, or Mr. George Ade or Mr. Ellis Parker Butler explain how it feels to be fifty?

There is scarcely any greater curiosity than that which is displayed about any man who has distinguished himself supremely in any direction. Ex-President Wilson is an example. The efforts of a whole school of literary sleuths have been expended in an endeavour to analyze his motives, dissect his emotions—if he has any—and tabulate his habits. Suppose that he himself had taken the lead, and as a kind of preface to his public documents had explained how he felt when he wrote them, what he

ate, what he wore. His career would have been much shorter than it has been. Such care has to be exercised in these matters that even Mr. Taft, now far removed from the presidency, almost invariably refers to himself, when writing for the public, as "the present writer." The difference seems to depend upon three things—upon what a man is writing about, upon the standard of public taste, and upon the writer himself. If Pepys' diary had been published during his lifetime, it would have excited derision and contempt. It is supremely interesting, not wholly for what Pepys says and does himself, but because what he said and did was part and parcel of the age in which he lived. After reading him we can reconstruct London as it then was, and once more walk its unwholesome streets with the vividness of actual presence.

There is, however, a deeper reason than the ones mentioned. When a man writes about himself, he must in reality be impersonal: That is, the things he writes about must be larger and more universal than he himself. However much we may deplore, during some moments of Wordsworth, not only his lack of humour, but the painful simplicity and naïvete of his most childish utterances, we realize that these cadences are common to all of us, and that they are much bigger than he is. It is quite largely a question of detachment, of the importance

of which few American writers understand. The great writers always succeed in detaching themselves from the thing they are writing about, even when it is themselves. They are always impersonal, even when they seem not to be so. Well, why not?

ON SKIPPING

THE business of skipping everything we read has become so universal and unconscious that few of us have stopped to consider its possibilities, or the great benefits to be derived by reducing it to a scientific basis. It is a process largely acquired by our habit of reading the newspapers. The men who write the headlines make it so easy for us that it is possible merely by turning over the pages and glancing at these headlines to get what we believe is a fair idea of what is going on without reading anything in the pages. We assume, with bland confidence, that the men who make the headlines must themselves read the articles, and that if there is anything in them worth knowing, the headlines will convey it to us.

It is quite remarkable that this system has not yet been applied to books, but that is because, doubtless, we have been so busy with other matters that we haven't gotten around to it. The trouble with the average index is that it has no developed plot. And the men who get up tables of contents appear to be bent upon concealing from us what we really want to know. To do the thing properly, of course,

as it really ought to be done, they might have to read the books themselves. That is a great deal to ask of a man who gets up the contents and index. He is a busy man. He has his responsibilities. He ought not to be pushed too hard. Besides, if he did read the books and were able to make his contents and index as good as they ought to be, this would show in him powers and abilities that he could use to better advantage in other directions. He could probably make more at writing headlines.

It might be practical to get the gentlemen who write the headlines and "doormats" to work evenings on books, and to give them the space which the obliging author employs for "forewords," introductions, and prefaces. This would be a great saving. We should only have to read the first few pages of a book, embodied thus in appropriate headlines, to discourse about it even more intelligently than we do at present.

It would not do to trust the author with this job. In the first place, he knows too much about the book. It is a fair assumption that he has read it almost too closely. This is a great handicap, for he would be sure to be biased in his view and put in something not essential. We want a trained skipper—one who touches the book only on the high spots.

It should be understood that we are not looking exactly for a summary, because a summary is generally dull and lacks dramatic excellence. We want

something which, in a few words, conveys the author's idea better than he himself has done it. "Hamlet" is considered by those who have taken the time and trouble to read it through, to be one of the best of Shakespeare's plays. It would be unfair to the more or less extinguished author to start off with:

Hamlet, a young prince of the house of Denmark, becomes very angry because his father-in-law has poured into his late father's ear something that caused his quietus. Hamlet resolves to get even, but puts off the fatal moment so long that he himself also dies. He is in love, by the way, with a handsome young woman named Ophelia.

This is all very well but—so to speak—it lacks pep. It doesn't get home to the reader. Something has got to be done to make the problem speak to all of us. We must be made to feel that it is a problem that really concerns us. It is only by making it a personal affair that we can get stirred up to any degree of literary curiosity or excitement; something like this:

WOULD YOU KILL YOUR FATHER-IN-LAW?

And At the Same Time Go Back On The Girl You Love?

Hamlet was confronted with this situation. He did not feel justified in waiting for the court to decide. Besides, his mother had married the man who killed his father too soon to make it entirely respectable, and Ophelia, his best girl, became mad by reciting too much modern poetry. Hamlet, therefore, kills everybody, including himself. It was a splendid thing for him to do, because it proves that living with your father-in-law under

these circumstances may be easily more unendurable than death itself and fully as bad as living with your mother-in-law. He also stabbed Polonius, a fearful bore, thus establishing a useful precedent.

The object of skipping any book in these days is to be able to discuss it with anybody else and to convey the unmistakable impression that you have read it to the bone. Subjected to this test, it will easily be seen that you already know enough about Hamlet for the purpose. In fact, it gives you a much greater advantage than if you had neglected your business and golf and baseball and the "movies" to study it more carefully. For you can now be offhand and delightfully humorous.

In these favourable circumstances, you meet a clever lady whom, because you do not care to marry her, you wish to impress with your lofty intelligence. And she says:

"Don't you think 'Hamlet' is a wonderful psychological study?"

"Tremendous," you say, flecking the ashes from your cigarette. "But it is a great pity that Ophelia got going on free verse. Otherwise she might have died sane."

"Oh, you dreadful iconoclast," she exclaims, tapping you reproachfully with her fan. "Always making fun of the most sacred things. Will you never be serious?"

"I assure you I am serious," you say gravely. "And who would live with one's father-in-law when he hasn't money enough to support you in the manner to which you have been accustomed?" You remark this at a venture. It isn't in the headline, but you know you are safe. You can say almost anything when, with a slight basis of fact, you say it in that way. And your reputation for being a Shakespearian scholar and an acute literary critic is thereby established beyond peradventure—as Shakespeare might himself say.

A bond of sympathy is immediately established between you. She is flattered by the fact that you have considered her worthy of your confidence to the extent of being able to understand the depth of your real meaning, clothed as it were in your inimitable wit. And when she meets you again she says:

"You are such a deep student of Shakespeare, won't you really tell me sometime—in one of your sober moments—what you consider his real message to the world?" To which you retort suavely:

"Ah, my friend, life is indeed a solemn tangle—let us not be too serious, or we shall go mad—like poor Ophelia."

It may be argued that the author of a modern book, in his introduction, or the publisher in his de-

scription, gives enough of an idea of it, so that the reading is entirely unnecessary. The author, for example, may begin with the startling and revolutionary words:

"In this book I have sought to convey——"

The only difficulty with this theory is that the author so rarely conveys what he thinks he is seeking to—and the publisher, knowing the genuine value of the book if he can only get it read, is rarely dishonourable enough, or unbusinesslike enough, to give away the whole plot in advance. Besides, it is not essential to know the real plot of a book in order to converse about it as if you had read it. If you want to know the plot of Hall Caine's books you have but to read the Bible, where he got them; and as many of us have read the Bible when very young, it is therefore not necessary to read Hall Caine's books at all. That is, unless you are reading for style; in which case you will of course read Hall Caine.

It is often best, however, not to know the plot. Mr. Galsworthy's "Saint's Progress" might be dealt with thus:

If you love a girl and her back-number father objects, is it right to keep a war waiting just to get married? May you not do something else?

N. B.

Girl's name: Noel Pierson.
Lover's name: Cyril Morland.

Armed with this fundamental information, you are approached once more by your literary lady. And she says:

"Don't you think 'Saint's Progress' is a wonderful study?"

"Ah, but," you soliloquize, flecking the ashes from your cigarette, "if you really want to get married properly, why not—I say *why not?*—keep a war waiting at least a couple of days?"

"You are quite impossible," she exclaims. "Will you never abandon your flippant manner? Don't you realize——?"

You do realize. Being now an accomplished skipper of books, you know that you mustn't go too far. And so you say, again gravely:

"Ah, yes. You are right. But what, after all, is marriage? The old boundaries are being broken down. Galsworthy is only slightly in advance of his age. He has true vision. What will the future be? How can any one forecast that? All I know is that there is something deeper than this false civilization—something hidden in our souls that——"

She clasps your hand.

"It is indeed so," she whispers, looking wistfully out of the ninth-story window toward Pittsburgh. "How well you voice it! How deep your insight! And Galsworthy! Is he not—wonderful?"

It is not improbable that there are many conscien-

tious people who will dismiss this whole argument as being too flippant in itself, and unworthy of any genuine lover of literature. But it must be remembered that, as the late Grover Cleveland remarked, we are confronted by a condition and not a theory. It is obvious that we can read only a small portion of what is being written, no matter how good it is. We must abandon the whole business, thus sacrificing the society and esteem of all literary people, or we must acquire the art of skipping. And the question then becomes, Shall we learn this art ourselves as it ought to be learned or shall we wait for the labour-saving headlines to come along? Time presses. Ten books will come out next week which not to know about is to argue one's self unknown.

Take Job. We had thought that this unfortunate gentleman's status was fairly well established, that his standing as a character in fiction was fixed so that we should not have to bother about him any more. He has served us well as a kind of example in patience and discipline. He made a poor selection of friends and undoubtedly talked too much to the neighbours about his symptoms and personal troubles. And yet, until the income tax and Bolshevism came along and the price of clothes got so high that it was no object for a modest and God-fearing man to wear them any more, we were inclined to sympathize with Job. But now is H. G. Wells, who writes

about Job; and in order to keep up with the literary times we must know what Mr. Wells thinks, or we shall be termed that ignominious thing, a lowbrow. This is also true of J. D. Beresford. We had supposed that the general object that people had in mind in getting married, in view of the high rents, was to save as much floor space as possible; yet in "God's Counterpoint" Mr. Beresford has his couple, on their honeymoon, hire no end of separate apartments, apparently regardless of expense, and all because the alleged hero's father refused to read *risqué* books in his early youth. It is not my intention to discuss matters of sex. I am no Robert Chambers in disguise, and I understand from members of my immediate family that the ground has already been covered by many painstaking and conscientious people who believe that writing literature is above any money consideration. But you cannot possibly discuss the subject of Platonic matrimonial friendship—assuming there is such a thing—with any Vassar graduate unless you have read, or know something about, Mr. Beresford's book.

We must, therefore, learn how to skip if we wish to achieve the reputation for being even semi-intelligent. And being semi-intelligent is almost a necessity—unless you live in New York.

The worst of it is that what you may need to know about a book may not be at its end, but concealed

somewhere inside of it, in a pocket, as it were. This means sharp looking, a sort of instinct acquired only by practice.

Macaulay used to do it by running his eye over the opening of each paragraph. He could usually track the essential thing to its lair in a short time. His wonderful memory was a great help. I am aware that memories are going out. But you can get one for five dollars at any correspondence school.

In addition to novels, however, there are other kinds of books which it seems necessary to skip in order to appear as if you knew something. No one ought, certainly in these times, to appear not to know something about the League of Nations. A year or so ago a brief skipping of the Constitution of the United States might have answered for this purpose. But in the best literary—and I believe also in the best political—circles, the Constitution is no longer *en regle*. It is therefore essential that we should do some skipping of the writings of modern historians. You will discover that your ignorance of the present League—an ignorance that you share with most good Americans—depends upon how little you know of former leagues. But after you have judiciously skipped Stephen Pierce Duggan's book ("The League of Nations. The Principle and Practice"), you will be entirely safe in meeting your literary lady. She will begin by saying:

"Don't you think the League of Nations is a wonderful psychological study?"

"Poor old Metternich," you will reply, somewhat absently flecking the ashes from your cigarette, "he little knew——"

She will press you for a more definite reply.

"Knew what?" she will ask, with the devotional aspect of one who seeks wisdom at its very fountainhead. And you will then realize your responsibility. This is no time for cheap cynicism or brilliant persiflage. You must get down to business.

"He little knew," you will go on, "the basic principles of self-determination. Much as we revere the Greeks, we have come to realize that, with the possible exception of Plato, they were, alas! but hopeless seekers after the light. And Rome! What is Rome now? The Holy Roman Empire has been dissolved. Do you realize that? Nothing but Shantung remains."

You will say this after a considerable pause, with deep feeling.

"It is as you say," she will remark. "Ah, my friend, if I did not feel that there were still minds like yours to grapple with these international problems, I should despair of my country."

You will then lay your hand upon her arm; not in the Robert Chambers or John Galsworthy or J. D. Beresford, or even the H. G. Wells or Hall Caine

manner, but more as William Howard Taft or Robert Lansing would do it.

"We must work together, we men and women of the higher mood, for the ultimate betterment of humanity, must we not?" you will whisper, discreetly.

And, as Hamlet remarks—at least so I am told by an invaluable friend of mine named Bartlett—"so runs the world away."

THE CARE AND TREATMENT OF GOLFERS

IT IS getting more and more impossible not to associate with people who play golf. At any time almost any one of us may marry a golfer without realizing the consequences. To be subjected to the constant conversational attacks of a golfer who is under the same roof with us—when he or she is not playing—is a fate that we must all look forward to. We must face it with what fortitude we can command and endeavour to neutralize it as much as possible.

The number of golf links is not only increasing rapidly, but the increasing expense naturally attracts all good Americans, as the more money they can spend on a sport the better they like it. No genius has yet risen who can turn out cheap "flivver" golf links at the rate of one a week. To play golf costs money that is not so good as it was, but is good enough if you have enough of it.

To belong to a golf club you not only need a set of clubs, a handful of loseable golf balls, and a motor car, but a certificate of stock in the club, a golfing trousseau, a set of red leather bridge markers, and a bottle of smuggled Scotch. This seems extravagant, but if you don't know how it may cost you a great

deal more in time spent explaining why you have never learned. The first man you meet will say:

"Well, how's your game?"

"What game?" you will ask innocently.

He will look at you as if you were the kind of man who boasts that he once voted for Bryan and say:

"Why, golf, of course."

"I don't play golf," you reply, with your teeth firmly set.

If any other game but golf were at stake he would leave you then and there, with a shrug and a smile of withering contempt; but golf has a much more deadly effect upon its devotees. It makes them extensively kind, interminably sympathetic, and offensively bland.

"You'll come to it," he will say, with patronizing and gentle tolerance. "It's the only game, in my opinion. Gets your mind off yourself. You need it—badly. Any one can see that. You got to take a few lessons first. It's form that counts. Some of 'em'll tell you it doesn't make any difference. Don't you believe 'em. That was my mistake. Took me two years to get rid of my faults. I was pulling and slicing all over the course. You got to keep your eye on the ball—that's one thing.

"Then there's your swing: you can't get a good swing unless you go at it right from the start. The best thing for you to do is to begin with one club.

Go out alone and practice. Don't get discouraged. Wonderful exercise, even if you don't get anywhere—and you can generally get some fellow that will play with you."

You meet him again, later on—before you have had the chance to avoid him—and weakly begin by apologizing in advance for not yet having followed his advice. There is, in fact, no other subject now to talk about. All other subjects have been barred out.

"Yes, I know," he replies, shaking his head dubiously, as if to imply on his part a conviction that no man of your moral limitations could be expected to meet the simplest obligation. "You keep putting it off—grow old before you know it—but of course it's strictly up to you." And next time you are more careful about this friend—who was once your friend. You look for him before you meet him—so you can cross over. If you do not forthwith become a golfer, you are likely to become a skulker.

Of course you will become a golfer—in time. You will do it, not only in self-defense, but in the true spirit of service. You will learn their ways, if only to bring something else other than golf sunshine into their sterile, occasionally profane, and generally bunker-ridden lives. You will mingle with them on their own home links, and if out of ninety-and-nine you can get one of them to talk of something else but golf, you will not have lived in vain.

But it isn't always the holing out that counts with a golfer; it is in the approach. And, strange as this may seem, not all golfers are alike. They all look alike when you view them from a short distance. They make the same gestures. They utter the same unintelligible sounds. It is only when you come to study them carefully that you will note their distinguishing traits.

Between the male and the female specimens there is, for example, a marked difference. The male golfer, when caught in a bunker, will bend over his labour like an anthracite miner who has a family to support, until at the fifth stroke his guttural sounds indicate an approaching crisis. In this condition he is quite dangerous and unless the ball rises very soon is prone to break his club over his knee.

The female golfer, on the other hand, at this stage emits only short, hysterical cries of anguish, and straightway resumes her placidity, with superb presence of mind putting down on her score card about half the number of strokes she has actually made.

It is well for us missionaries, who play golf only that we may regenerate those who are quite abandoned, to know about these things. Male golfers in their habits are largely gregarious, and after concluding their regular game, sprinkle themselves with hot and cold water and group themselves together in a room where they take up once more, with re-

newed fury, another occupation entitled "post mortem golf," pursuing it far into the night. The female golfers, on the other hand, indulge only sparingly in post mortems immediately after play, reserving their energies until later, for members of their immediate family circles, or innocent people who may have been led into being their guests.

The male golfer is sometimes obliged, by force of circumstances over which he appears to have no control, to play with a female golfer, but when this happens he usually selects a young and handsome female, not a member of his own household. There are exceptions to this rule, but they never occur when he is playing on any distant links.

With these few general remarks on the flora and fauna of golfers, the nature of the problem before us should be readily grasped by any fairly intelligent person. The great question is, What are we to do?

We must organize. Our work must be constructive and not destructive. We must gradually seek to build up, in the lives of those golfers we approach, something else besides golf. We must get the men golfers into the habit of talking occasionally about business, or political economy, or psycho-analysis, or free verse, or Congress, or almost anything equally unintelligible.

For those imbued with the crusading spirit of ultimate golf righteousness and who have not learned

the game, we must establish golf correspondence schools, so they can make it at least appear that they are familiar enough with ordinary golf jargon to pass muster in a crowd. And, of course, we must first learn to control ourselves and, as an example in self-abasement, be able sternly to put away from us at any moment our own golf.

He who conquereth his own golf is greater than he who reduceth his average score by eight strokes in one season. Assuming that you know the difference between a mashie and a niblick, or why a spoon brassie is better than a wooden cleek in the long grass on the tenth hole, you must sternly refrain from explaining, either to the newcomer or the old stager, that the jigger you have just had made to order according to a formula of your own is, in this particular emergency, the only club to use.

Neither must you explain that up to and including the seventeenth you had a clean score of eighty-five and if it hadn't been for your driving into the ditch on the last hole and taking five to get out you would have won the match.

And when some chance comrade sidles up and remarks, "Do you play golf?" you must have the courage to reply, "Yes, I play it but I don't talk it."

Well, Why Not?

This way only does our golf salvation lie.

A FIRST NIGHT—WITH A DOG

THE other day I brought home a dog. The way I happened to get him was this. I was walking along, thinking of nothing in particular, when I came to a dog-store window. And I naturally stopped. Everyone stops at a dog window. If he doesn't, well, you know what he is. I stopped at that window, I saw that dog, and I went in and bought him. He was sitting there in the window with an expectant look in his eyes, generally wretched and miserable, as if he were in need of a friend. The lady in charge said he was six months old, in prime condition, and quite reliable and trustworthy. He had short hair, a crooked tail, and looked like a Boston bull. I got him for ten dollars because he had no pedigree. What he lacked in pedigree he made up in human interest and reckless affection. I got him home in a basket.

My reception was all that could be desired, and more. Even the austere lady of the house, after the first dismay, fell a victim to his canine charms. As for the children, their joy knew no bounds. Neither did the dog.

Night fell rapidly. The stars came out and twinkled their pleasure, and the hour came when it was

time to go to bed. Everybody wanted that dog, but my superior logic prevailed. I would keep him for a few nights and train him. So we got a clothes basket and a blanket and I put the dog into it, told him to lie down, and composed myself to sweet slumber.

The dog was overjoyed with the basket, but he was more overjoyed with me. Have you ever been flattered—at night—by a joyous dog? Have you seen his tail quiver with affection?

"Lie down, Beppo," I said (we had decided to call him Beppo). "There's a good dog." Beppo was unwilling to lie down. He had no difficulty in getting out of his basket. The more I put him into it the more overjoyed he was to leap out of it. "This is a game," said Beppo, "that two—quite fortunately for me—can play at."

Beppo won. He had me four down at the end of the ninth basket approach.

Then I decided to put him at the foot of my bed. I covered him up with his blanket and swiftly sank my head on the pillow. Beppo made a splendid follow through and landed on my bald spot—with his tongue. It was the only thing in sight. As often as I rose in my exhausted might and put him where I wanted him to belong, as often did he romp back to that bald spot.

"I'll fix you!" I chattered. With Beppo firmly

grasped under one arm, I staggered into the upper hall. Yes, there it was—the banded pasteboard box that contained the lady's priceless hat which had come by express that day. Removing the imported contents—evidence of a fictitious, fabulous prosperity—I put Beppo inside, shut down the cover, punched a few air holes, and fastened the box firmly between two chairs. Then I crept back into bed. With enormous resolution, I ignored the distant muffled whines, and fell thereafter into a fitful slumber.

The next morning I was awakened by an ominous sound. It was not Beppo. It was the voice of a lady—high-pitched and vibrant with hysterical meaning. There were tears in that voice.

"Come here," said the lady, "and see what you have done."

I came, I saw, and I shuddered.

There sat Beppo, the conqueror. He had put his teeth in an air hole and ripped his way out. The remains of the priceless hat—for which I would pay later in coin of the realm—lay scattered to the four walls of our haven of unrest.

"Did you say," remarked the lady some hours later, "that Beppo had cost you only ten dollars? How thrifty of you!" And she smiled as sweetly as, in the forlorn circumstances, it was possible.

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND

HUMOUR and Satire once met at a country inn. Humour was rather quiet and portly, with a look of conspicuous comfort. Satire's features, on the other hand, were sharply defined. He was by no means, however, the unpleasant person that some imagine him. An air of ingenuousness and a certain sympathetic attachment to what was being said produced a feeling of keen interest in him and pleasure in his presence.

They occupied a private room.

"How long do you expect to remain here?" said Humour.

"I really don't know. I'm a stranger to America. Rather interesting place. I could keep very busy here—if the people took to me. But I don't feel quite at home. They don't seem to understand my ways."

Humour smiled.

"They *are* peculiar," he said. "I myself have been living here for some time, but they don't even understand me thoroughly, although they think they do. They often pretend that I amuse them deeply, but the large proportion of them are hypo-

crites. They are really a melancholy lot and try to conceal it by making out that they are on constant and familiar terms with me."

"That is not so singular as another thing I know—the fact that, although we are so closely related and really ought to have so much in common, we have never met before."

At this moment the landlord of the inn, who bowed profoundly to Humour as a distinguished guest, but barely noticed Satire, approached with two cards.

"There are two gentlemen outside who wish to meet you," he said. Humour glanced at the cards, as well as through the door at the two sombre figures outlined. Then he turned with a quiet smile to Satire.

"I'll now show you something more singular than the thing you have just mentioned," he observed. "Those two fellows out there are apparently total strangers to each of us. Think of that. They wish to meet us for the first time."

"Who are they?"

"One is a professional satirist and the other a professional humourist."

RETICENCE

AMONG a host of latter-day sins is any one considered greater than reticence?

To be reticent is to be modest, to keep one's self in the background, to dwell under the spell of an obsolete humility; and as if these counts were not enough to condemn it, most terrible of all accusations is the one which reveals the reticent person as being wholly oblivious to the supreme advantages of advertising. The other frailties might be inherited, like a short upper lip, or any other deformity, but this last is plain stupidity. For surely there is no person in his senses to-day but who thoroughly understands the intellectual, not to mention the moral, necessity of all advertising in general, and of self-advertising in particular. Not, we hasten to exclaim, of blatant, or vulgar, or crude self-advertising, which uses, for example, a brass band or gilt-edged, embossed letter paper with a portrait engraved in the upper left-hand corner, all for the purpose of getting one's self elected Mayor or president of the Needlework Guild. No, not that. All that is past. But it is the self-advertising which has come to be a fine art, if not *the* fine art of the day, to which we al-

lude; an art elucidated by psychologists, elaborated by efficiency experts, and extolled by bishops.

The competition is keen. You must, for example, if you wish to "land," so to speak, "in the public eye," become so active in disinterested public service as to be worthy of notice in the local papers and to be commented upon editorially and occasionally as a shining example of civic righteousness. There is a regular formula for this sort of thing. Consider the immense benefit at the start of establishing a reputation for civic courage. This can be done in so many ways. You can call somebody a liar, you can denounce the local political reform league, or you can come out against the Indigo Sabbath. Henceforth your envious rivals will say of you, as they shake their heads dubiously: "He has mighty few friends left. He's wrong on every question. But—what nerve!" Henceforth you have an assured place in the newspapers, right next to the impure reading matter.

Reticence is the reverse of all this, the most despised of all sins, because it leads nowhere, and "nowhere" is not one of those American ideals of which orators tell us so much every day. Even babies no longer affect it. Once, when you drew near a strange baby, he hung his head, put his finger in his mouth, and bellowed for the fire department, the local police system, Pinkerton's Agency, and his

mother. Now he leans back nonchalantly, smiles patronizingly, holds out a chubby paw and says, by Jove, he's glad of the honour. There is, indeed, no fazing a modern baby, brought up on twilight sleep, Claxton horns, trained nurses, phonographs, and comic sections. That which Tennyson spoke of as: "Such fine reserve and noble reticence" is no longer good form commercially. There is no room for it. It produces nothing but courtesy and honesty and meditation, the three disgraces.

If there were need of it, we should see it reproduced in women's clothes. But who sees reticence in women's clothes?

HEARTS

DID you ever play Bridge? Well, why not? They said it's a good game but I don't see so much to it. I was over at my cousin's the other night, having dropped in on them unexpectedly (so nice, you know, to have a place like that where you can feel free to drop in at any time), and they had a bridge party on. At the last moment someone telephoned regrets and my cousin turned to me and said:

"George, you must help us out. You play, of course."

Now I don't play, you know, but I like to be obliging, and so I said:

"I shall be delighted to help you out, only my game——"

"There, there," said my cousin, "I understand. Don't deprecate yourself. I wager you're a fiend at it."

Of course I've played whist, and I knew bridge was the next worst thing, for I never could understand anyway the passion for cards which possesses some people.

I drew a violently handsome young woman for my partner. I knew at a glance that she was a good

player. She had a sort of chronic bridge look about her, which did not take from her beauty in the least. But I've knocked about the world a bit and am not apt to get rattled easily.

"Strength or weakness?" she asked in businesslike tones, looking coldly at me as she shuffled the cards. (It was her deal.)

"Beg pardon?" I said.

"Do you discard from strength or weakness?"

She repeated more fully this time. But she wasn't going to catch me as early in the game as that. I bowed politely.

"I prefer not to say," I replied. "I would rather not give away my game." I felt that was an inspiration.

Our opponents exchanged what was plainly an attempt at a courageous smile. But I knew already that I had them on the run. After all, it's confidence in oneself that wins.

My partner glanced over her hand and said, "I pass over."

My right-hand opponent was a large man with a thin red face, small eyes, and mustaches on either side of his face that fell away—or rather drooped but slightly—to a single fierce hair. I waited some time for him to speak. Finally, I said as politely as possible:

"What do you do, sir?"

I fancied I heard him snort, but this after all might have been only my imagination.

"This is not a game of euchre," he replied. "We are all waiting for you. What do you do, sir?"

There are moments when one should make concessions to any enemy. Besides, I was there to learn quickly and not to appear as if I was ignorant. So I said warmly:

"Of course! How stupid of me. I *have* been playing euchre a great deal lately and momentarily I forgot."

I scanned my hand critically.

"Um. Ah!" I said. "Sorry, I pass also."

This time there was no mistake about it. My right-hand opponent did snort.

I saw then that I had made a mistake. I had been too apologetic. I was about to snort back (this being the only method of retaliation that immediately occurred to me) when my partner, in a wonderfully low, even voice looked at me fixedly as she said:

"You must make it, you know. Just take your longest suit, that is, the one you have the most of, no matter whether they are high or not, and make it that."

I listened intently, for if I do say it, I have always been remarkably quick to pick anything up, and when she had finished, I said:

"Yes. That was precisely what I was going to

do when this gentleman"(I purposely lingered on that word) "interrupted me. I was about to say that I pass to hearts."

Without at all appearing to do so, even while I spoke, I had rapidly calculated that I had seven hearts in my hand, which were more cards than any other suit contained.

"May I play to a heart?" said Whiskers (for this is the name I immediately gave him).

"You may," replied his partner, who appeared to me a nervous system inhabited by a spinster lady of uncertain age. If she had indeed possessed half as much intellect she might have been a leader of some new reform movement. As it was, she was the best bridge player in a community that so far as I could gather never did anything else but eat and sleep and complain of high taxes.

Whiskers led the ace of spades, and, not having any spades, I was about to trump it triumphantly with one of my hearts when I caught my partner looking at me. Indeed, by this time, I was learning to look for her looks. It was worth more than a knowledge of the game itself just to be on such a confidential basis with a grand creature as that.

"You lay down your hand," she said, quietly, "on the table."

"To be sure, to be sure," said I, remembering that I had seen some such thing in watching others. With

this I put down the ace, king, queen, knave, and ten of hearts and two others, with the ace, queen, seven of clubs and king, queen, and ten of diamonds.

"That was the only thing to do," said I, as my partner, following my suggestion, trumped the ace of spades.

"No talking, sir, *if you please*," said Whiskers, glaring fiercely at me. "This is bridge, sir. I say, this is bridge."

"Indeed," I replied, calmly. And I fancy I rather had the upper hand. "I was under the impression that it was a zangerfest."

I knew instantly that Whiskers didn't know what a zangerfest was. For that matter, neither did I. But it told heavily upon him, for not to know about it made it appear worse. And somehow it seemed to add to the subtle irony of my remark to have it as remote and unintelligible as possible. He sighed deeply and looked at his partner hopelessly in a manner almost enough to make her bones crack. Indeed, I almost fancied I could hear them crack. In the meantime, my partner had taken another trick.

"Score, one game for you," said Whiskers (who was keeping it), "with 64 in honours and 56 in tricks."

"Not so bad," said I, cheerfully. I was bound to get a rise out of somebody if I could, but all were silent. Only I found my partner and myself exchang-

ing glances. She was growing more handsome every minute.

Whiskers dealt.

When he looked over his cards he said:

"Without."

"Excuse me," said I. "Without—what?"

"Without trumps, you——"

He gave another snort. Perhaps he was trying to get back at me for that zangerfest by leaving what I was to the imagination. It takes more than a pair of whiskers, however, to rattle me. I realized also that I must keep my temper. Besides, I was getting busy with my partner's eyes (an occupation in itself) and I was gathering inspiration right along.

I looked at my hand, and although it was another pack of cards, there were those same hearts, seven of 'em, almost the same as before. This time I had the ace, king, jack, ten, eight, and two others.

"I'll raise you," I said, wondering why Whiskers could be such an ass as to make it without any trumps in his hand.

"You mean," said my partner, gently, "that you double."

"Yes, of course," I chuckled instantly. "You see I'm a fiend on poker. I mean, of course, that I double." ("Whatever that may be," I added to myself.)

"I'm satisfied," said Whiskers.

I bowed ceremoniously.

"I'm very glad to hear it," I said. "I was beginning to be afraid you were too hard to please."

My partner didn't give him time to reply.

"You may play," she said to me.

If any one else had volunteered this gratuitious information, I should have been inclined to resent it. But somehow, coming from her, it seemed eminently proper.

"Thank you," I replied, without a trace of sarcasm.

I led the ace of hearts and followed it with the king. Whiskers slapped his queen on it.

"That was my only weak spot," he snorted at his partner who gave him an osseous smile intended to be encouraging.

"No talking, if you please," said I, in a harsh, rasping voice. "This is bridge, sir. I say, this is bridge."

Then I played out the rest of my hearts, and we got the odd trick.

While I was dealing I couldn't help but rub it in.

"If I had been in your place, sir," I said, in an easy, familiar tone, "being without any trumps, I would have passed it."

Whiskers glared at me.

"Don't you know, sir," he hissed, "that there were no trumps in that hand?"

"When you play without," my partner explained to me gently, "that means there are no trumps."

"Bah!" snorted Whiskers, "you should learn the rudiments of the game, sir."

"I'm fairly satisfied with the way I'm doing, sir," I replied with a fetching smile—for I knew now I fairly had him on the run—"and just to prove it"—I had seen my hand—same old hearts—"I'll make it without myself. Now you, sir, raise me or double if you please."

"May I play?" asked Miss Bones at my left.

"You may," answered Whiskers, not deigning to notice me.

She led a small club, Whiskers put a king on it, while I, having only a queen and ace, put on my ace. Then I led out my hearts.

In the midst of the operation, however, Whiskers suddenly roared.

"You're leading out of the wrong hand, sir."

"Which hand, sir?" said I.

"Your partner's hand," he snorted.

"Can you blame me?" I smiled. "With such a partner and such a hand could anybody be expected to lead from anything else?"

Then I gave my partner another look. And somehow, I knew I had scored more than three tricks.

At the end of an hour, during which I held mostly aces and queens, the bell rang and we stopped.

Whiskers and Bones made some calculations on paper, and then bringing out a pocket check book he made some vicious dabs at it with a fountain pen, while she murmured something about settling with him in the morning. Then he handed my partner and myself two checks, and getting up looked over the heads of everyone and in a faraway voice, low enough to make it appear that it wasn't intended for publication, and loud enough for everyone to hear, said, with a final snort:

"That comes from playing with a d—d fool who never has played before. Never knew it to fail."

As for my partner she whispered:

"We've won two hundred apiece, and you're a *dear*. Is there any other game you know any better?"

"Well, why not?" I replied. "Let's go into the conservatory—and you shall judge for yourself."

A NEW FIELD OF LITERATURE

THE biography of any married man, considered purely from the matrimonial standpoint, has never been written. No married man would dare write it during his lifetime, and if he turned it over to a friend there would be trouble enough for all concerned. Many prominent men have had biographies written about them, and their wives have not been spared. But generally speaking, the book has not been published until after the death of the subject. When the thing has been done at all, however, as in the case of Ruskin, Wagner, Carlyle, and Socrates, the affair has been one-sided. Few women, wives of great men, have written biographies of their husbands. It would be very interesting if Xanthippe, the wife of Socrates, could have written about some of the things he did, and from her standpoint.

What a man is, is not only what he thinks he is, but what other people think he is, based upon the sum total of his actions as they record them. What any man's wife thinks he is, considering the fact that she has him under much closer inspection than anybody else, is certainly important. Yet this side of literature has been altogether neglected.

This is, however, a severely embarrassing matter. We can certainly do nothing about the people who are gone. It is too late. We don't know what the first lady who lived with Wagner thought of him. We can imagine what Josephine may have thought of Napoleon: and yet what she said about him at any period should not be taken too seriously. It is one thing for a woman to give vent to her feelings and quite another for her to sit down calmly in front of a typewriter and give her estimate of his character.

Now there are undoubtedly heartless cynics who will dismiss this whole matter as unworthy of the attention of conscientious students, on the ground that women are not qualified to give a fair opinion of their husbands. But the question is not whether such an account would be fair or accurate, but whether it would be interesting. No biography of a great man can be accurate. Boswell did as well as he could and doubtless took greater pains than any other man to set his hero right with the public. But it is necessary to read between the lines of Boswell's book to get at Johnson at all, and every time it is re-read one gets a different idea. Henry Adams conceived the idea of writing about himself in the third person, and his "Education" was a remarkable literary success. But what a delightful thing it would be if his grandmother could have written his grandfather up in her own way!

It is quite appalling, and in a sense disheartening, when one comes to think of it, that such an important field of literature should have been overlooked. Can the omission be remedied for the benefit of future generations?

At first blush it would seem as if this were possible, because women are more and more coming to take an equal share with men in the world's affairs. Women have already proved that they can write history and do it exceedingly well; that they can analyze character, and do it well; in short, that in the particular fields of thought in which men have hitherto been thought to be supreme, women can do the work as well. The difficulty with such a hypothesis, however, is this: that no woman who is able to write about a man as he ought to be written about by a woman would ever marry a man who is worth while writing about. On the other hand, if men steadily decline in intelligence, as they seem to be doing, and women advance, great men will go out (as they seem to be going out), and it will then become a question whether any man will have capacity enough, in case he happens to be married to a great woman, to write about her in the way that she ought to be written about.

It will doubtless be seen from this that the whole matter is quite complicated, and we should be inclined to give it up forthwith, if it were not for the

immense need for a new field in literature. Unless a new field is discovered very soon whole hordes of writers will have to do something else—they will have to go out and make a respectable living. It is no small job for any author to do this. Few authors know how to do anything useful, and would starve if they had to. Almost any popular author can, at a pinch, drive his car about, and possibly in an acute emergency manage to get a tire off and on. But that is about as much as he knows. Few authors have even the natural intelligence or steadiness of character to keep an eight-day clock going. They will let it go until it runs down, and then get the housemaid to wind it up again. Many of them indeed have to have their wrist-watches wound up by their wives. They have to be dressed by people specially trained for the purpose; their cravats have to be tied for them, their shoes removed at night; they require special foods to keep them alive; in matters of finance they are good only as far as their fingers count. They cannot pack a trunk or even a dress-suit case without having white trailers flowing out from the ends.

Yet the opinions and the idle fancies of these men are awaited by the public with feverish expectancy, and their utterances are debated by sober people in horn glasses with obsequious solemnity. The reason for all this must be quite apparent to any close observer, for it is upon their ignorance that authors

depend for a living. The proof of this lies in the fact that if a man knows a subject thoroughly and accurately, when he writes about it, he is invariably dull. The majority of people are ignorant; and to reach the majority, it is essential to be one with them. The way a thing looks is much more a source of profit than what it is; and the moving-picture star, therefore, is paid higher than the professor of mathematics.

The majority of people, however, have been fed upon the various kinds of literature until they are sated with it. It is true that the war was a help, but it was only temporary—a sop for the multitude. On the day the armistice was signed, word went out from all the short-story centres of industries that there were to be no more stories of the war. There was wailing and gnashing of teeth in the home of many a short-story writer; strong men wept, and the plots of nine months of assembling were thrown on the scrap heap. Poetry has had a slight turn for the better, writers having discovered that they could write it without rhythm or rhyme, by merely juggling a lot of words together. But this sort of thing has no lasting hold. Something must be done. For the novelist a new sex must be invented, which, even considering the possibilities of woman suffrage, seems fairly remote.

In all the long line of literature, however, there is nothing more permanently interesting than person-

ality, and while there are still a few great men left, the right thing to do is to get their wives to write about them.

Eve might have done it if she had had the facilities. Adam was new and green at the business; his psychology hadn't been developed; he had no complexes. He had never lost a fortune in Wall Street, nor had been loved by another woman. But he had it in him. The thing to do would have been to get him, fresh as he was, and analyze him. What we need is to get down to first principles. Our civilization is so vast we fail to recognize that, after all, it is made up of only a few elemental motives. When Adam took the apple, how simple and unadorned was his fall. Men are falling like that now every hour of the day, but the process has become so complicated that few eyes—even when equipped with horn glasses—can follow it accurately. Eve knew why he fell, and why he felt mad about it afterward, and all the monosyllabic way in which he conducted himself. What a pity that she could not have called a stenographer, and made the first literary analysis of the first man!

That the wives of great men suffer from this obstacle erected by the absurd canons of public taste must be evident. Napoleon's valet wrote about him, but what a poor rendering that is! All the books about him would have to be rewritten, if Josephine could only put down her real opinion.

MY SUBWAY GUARD FRIEND

I HAVE always wanted to have an intimate interview with a New York subway guard. Selecting one that I thought would answer my purpose, I arrayed myself in medieval armour, and sent up my card.

He received me very pleasantly.

"Sit down and make yourself at home," he said, throwing me across the room into a chair. "You don't know how to sit down, do you?" He stood me on my head once or twice, broke a collar bone or so and I believe a rib, and arranged me in the proper manner.

"There, that's better," he said. "Now, what can I do for you? Any little thing."

My armour, which, though not made to order, fitted me fairly well when I entered, was now bent so as to occasion me some slight inconvenience. But I smiled brightly and replied:

"I came in to know how you like your life-work?"

"I was born to it," he replied, playfully putting his feet on my chest and gently exerting a four-hundred-pound pressure until I felt the wall behind

me preparing to yield. "It's a great thing to understand your job, to like it, and to know that you are the right man in the right place."

"Don't you find," I ventured, "that people are often rude to you?"

"That is my cross," he replied. "The work of every real artist is handicapped by the misunderstanding of the purely vulgar; but I bear with them, I bear with them."

He started to move me to the ceiling, when, thinking that I might interest him in the details of his profession, I asked:

"At a guess, about how many people can you get into an ordinary subway car?"

He smiled blithely and flicked the ashes of a superb stogie into my off eye.

"It depends entirely upon my moods," he replied. "I am very temperamental. If I am feeling in fairly good condition, and at peace with all the world, I can get in about five thousand."

"That is a goodly number," I ventured. The truth is, my mind was beginning to wander slightly, and my blood pressure, I should judge, was about one thousand, and I was afraid to start anything too definite.

"I suppose," I added, as vaguely as possible, "that on your off days you couldn't pack in more than two or three hundred or possibly——"

A hurt look came into his eye, and I saw his muscles begin to swell ominously.

"*Now* you are guying me," he said. Picking me up and throwing me down, he stamped on me for a few moments until my new suit was something like a sheet of steel writing paper. Then he folded me up and shot me through the door.

"Come around and see me again," he chortled, "I'm a little off to-day—not quite myself."

BEST SELLERS I HAVE NEVER READ

I HAVE never read a best seller. My general ignorance of these works of art—for so I am told they are—is profound and highly important. I am the only one I know who is capable of judging them entirely upon their merits, without any prejudice. It is always fatal to become familiar with anything which you wish to estimate correctly and with absolute justice. You are bound to take on a particular point of view, which, while personally interesting and more or less conclusive, is essentially worthless from a practical standpoint. I have talked with a great many people who are addicted to the habit of reading best sellers, but have never gotten anything out of them that was of the slightest value. Most of them are silent on the subject. They devour their best sellers, one after the other, without comment. They have no views on the subject any more than one has views on chocolate caramels. Others are distinctly voluble but entirely irresponsible. They love some best sellers with a passionate love, although they never can tell you why, except to smile idiotically and declare they are the best things they ever read. They hate other best sellers

with the same passion, and cannot understand how any one else can like them. As a basic and absolutely impregnable proposition, I have therefore great sympathy for the writers of best sellers, because they are read by so many people that any genuine estimate of them is impossible. They certainly need to be defended by someone who does not read them.

There are also exclusive, highly intellectual, and no doubt occasionally intelligent people who do not regard best sellers as works of art, who declare that they are unworthy of serious respect. But I cannot say that the opinion of these critics seriously interests me. From my vulgar and admittedly commercial viewpoint, best sellers have one great merit. They are read by large numbers of people, and this enables their authors to live in ease and comfort. Any one who in these days can manage to live in ease and comfort is certainly worthy of admiration. It is a great thing to be able to maintain yourself without borrowing money from your friends or occasioning them any particular anxiety. I have never met the author of a best seller, although I once called on Barkington Tooth—or is it Tarkington Booth?—and found him out, to my dismay. For I am quite sure, if I ever did meet one, I should not approach him beforehand with the thought that after all it might be well for me to lock up all my valuables in

the safe, and to remove my Waterbury watch from my off wrist. And that is a great deal to say of any maker of literature, alleged or otherwise. Why is it any more disgraceful to sell all the product of your brains while you are alive and can enjoy the proceeds—as in the case of George Barr Oppenheim or Mary Johnston McCutcheon—than to be like Shakespeare and Bunyan and others I might mention, and have the sales come a long time after you are dead? Is it anything against any man that he should honourably work for immediate results? If, for example, Goldsmith had had more of this best-seller spirit in him, think of how glad all his friends would have been when he asked them out to luncheon.

In every age there is a certain small body of professional highbrows, who set up their own standards as the only standards worth while and assume that if any book commands a large audience it must necessarily be unworthy. I would not condemn these friends unjustly. I will even go so far as to say that a man may be a member of the Society of Arts and Letters and still have lurking somewhere within him the power to become known. But I do claim that just because an author is read, is no reason why he should be treated just like any ordinary millionaire. An ordinary millionaire extracts money from others without any power to interest them during

the proceeding. They do not sit up nights enjoying it. He may grip them, but not in that way. Nobody likes to give up money to an ordinary millionaire, and the process is so unpleasant that, in order to get his results, the millionaire has to do business in devious ways. Not so the author of the best seller. He is frank and open, and everybody comes up and lays money down before him gladly, with the feeling that they are getting something for it that they can talk about to their friends.

I can see no particular reason why the majority should not rule in literature as in other respects, and why they should not have the privilege of setting a standard of literature that will be recognized as the one and only standard. Why is not Harold Bell Churchill greater than Henry James? Why are not Winston Cecil Thurston and Sinclair Lewis Hergesheimer and MacConnor Grath greater than Samuel Butler and Thomas Love Peacock?

Aside, however, from its power to place its author beyond the anxiety of the world at large, the best seller has another merit. It keeps a large majority of people from reading books that are not best sellers. If there were no more best sellers, everybody would have to fall back on Homer and Shakespeare and Samuel Richardson and Fielding and Jane Austen and the pocket editions of the classics. And where would we be then? In a short time the taste for

reading newspapers would decline and there would be nothing but bare accounts of what is happening in the world. Paper-mills would languish. Our trees would begin to grow in peace. Everybody would begin to cultivate his leisure.

WOMEN WE ARE ALWAYS MARRYING

AN ACCOUNT OF THE DOMESTICUS AMERICANUS MATRIMONIOUS, OR MANKIND IN THE MATING

THE open season for matrimony begins in the early spring and extends well into the summer and autumn. Its greatest ravages are confined to the month of June, but the casualties have been known to be high even in October. Every four years the female of her species leaps from crag to crag in search of victims. Widows are particularly voracious and stalk their prey without special regard to locality or previous condition of servitude. Owing to the H. C. of L. and the talk going on in Congress (and elsewhere) the vitality of most men has been very low, and they have not been able to resist the ravages of matrimony. Without any visible means of support, they have been carried off their feet and to their fate, unwept, unhonoured, and unsung. The only ray of sunlight on the matrimonial situation is that the female of her species now often makes such good money on her own account that she can support a mate in comparative ease, without his doing a stroke of work. This is often a help, but is still the

exception. Meanwhile, man as a whole is apparently doing nothing to prevent being married by the first woman who comes along. He prides himself upon his efficiency, but has devised no method of protecting himself from the female of her species. People are getting married all the time who never have given it a previous thought. We train for every other kind of servitude beforehand. You can't be a plumber, a political economist, a faro dealer, a theologian, a Wall Street broker, a printer, or even a bank president, a college professor, or a professional humourist without previously having your spirit broken to harness; but in matrimony a man waits until afterward to have this happen. He plunges, or rather is dragged, into the stream without knowing what is going to happen to him. He is, of course, entirely unfitted for the job. He knows as little about handling a hired girl as his wife does—even less. He cannot make up a bed. He has no expert knowledge of dusting and sweeping. He couldn't check up a laundry list to save his life or set the table or bathe the baby without calling in the help of the local hospital and the fire department. And this utterly helpless creature is at the mercy of the first plumaged female who comes along, gives him an intimate smile, and says "Oh, Boy" to him with a certain inflection. Besides, you cannot pair them off against one another. They never hunt in pairs

but always singly. When you are quietly grazing in some sheltered business nook, scraping off from the rocks a few excess profits, there is a flutter of wings and you are carried away to Apartment Number 19 on the tenth floor, where the dumbwaiters never cease from creaking and the landlords grab what pay is left after your bride has rigged herself out in a new spring hat.

And we excuse all this stupidity and almost criminal lack of forethought by laying it to Nature. We delude ourselves with the idea that Nature supplies us with instincts and, therefore, enables us to be appropriated by the right girl each time. The only trouble with this beautiful theory is that it doesn't work. For if we really obeyed it, a man would want to marry quite a large proportion of all the females he meets. Some do. But if the most of us did, we would be spending a large part of our alleged leisure time in jail.

No, men of America, we cannot, we must not, hide behind Nature's apron strings any longer. We may as well face this thing first as last. The great issue of the near future is self-determination for all husbands. Falling in love must be put on a business basis, open courtships openly arrived at. Men must be privileged to make their own choice and accept no substitutes—unless they so desire. The Flora and Fauna and general habits of the female

of her species must be studied and classified with a view to getting a basis of inter-matrimonial agreement. Eventually there must be a hymeneal clearing house, where, if necessary, wives can be exchanged without disturbing the balance of home trade. Now, if a man substitutes one wife for another, it costs so much that the rate of exchange is likely to upset even the local plumber's union. Besides, matrimony at present is not altogether an affair between two people. Take the question of relatives. It used to be so that when a man married he could transport his wife to a sheltered home and settle down in comparative security. But this is no longer possible. It is a mighty poor relative now that hasn't at least one motor car, and also they can always get you over the phone. And they do, fellows, as nice as some of them may be.

In order that we may know more and more where we stand or fall, a brief description of the most important specimens of female will be an aid to the numerous innocent young men who are even now coming into the matrimonial hunting preserves.

The *Sporticus Athleticus* ranges in age from sixteen to sixty, and can be seen in large numbers on golf links and in tennis courts, where they leap about and utter short cries of rage or victory as the case may be. They rarely settle down, and when married, use their homes for a base of supplies. Their

husbands are used largely for changing tires or looking for lost balls.

The *Vampire* is a species not indigenous to any climate, but seen in all parts, although its true habitat is the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the Rialto. Attempts have been made to domesticate the *Vampire*, but with small success, although some of the village varieties have at times yielded to the subtle lure of the kitchen sink and the cosy corner.

The *House Martinet* is seen in considerable numbers in the suburbs, where she roams from piazza to piazza in summer and discusses the qualities of her captive husband with others of her species. She lives to a great age, thrives on worry, and prides herself on being the only specimen of her sex who knows how to keep house, thus making miserable all who come within her stamping ground.

The *Blue Crested Orator* in her youthful state is frequently beautiful and looks extremely well on grandstands, which are her favourite haunt. Her voice can be heard at all hours of the day and night, and she ranges from coast to coast, perching at night on the picket fence in front of the White House.

The *Bat Winged Highbrow* first came from the the Back Bay region, Boston, and gradually spread as far west as Lawrence, Kansas, where numbers can now be seen grazing on the University playgrounds. They emit frequent cries of intelligence, and spend

their time at authors' readings and musicales, thus giving their husbands a breathing spell. Their instincts are sharply developed and they frequently find their way home from long distances without the aid of the Supreme Court.

The Jazzer and the *Golden Spender* are both beautiful specimens, frequently seen together. The *Jazzer* as a rule never rises before noon, however, while the *Golden Spender* is busy shopping from dawn until dusk. She is known by the great extent and variety of her bills.

The *Domesticated Darling*, if not the most popular species, is the one that ought to be most in demand, and the one that all men eventually want to marry. She spends her time on the home nest, divides her duties with her mate, never flies too high or too low, grows more beautiful as time goes on, and is frequently referred to as "good old pal." She is the only specimen that no man need be afraid of. Tell me, please, why not?

WHAT IS ADVERTISING?

THE APPLE WHICH EVE HANDED ADAM WAS THE FIRST MEDIUM. WELL, WHY NOT?

EVERYTHING in this country has been defined except advertising. Congress has been defined. And so have War and Peace, Theology, Cubism, Baseball, Golf, Wall Street, Kansas, Hell, Tammany Hall, and why a woman steps off a car backward.

Many attempts have been made to define advertising, but none of them has succeeded.

What advertising is nobody knows. Everybody thinks he knows. I do not know. If I did know I would not be writing about it.

But although I do not know about advertising I think I know. When we don't know about a thing but think we do, we always want to tell what we think it is.

Advertising is like electricity. We use it, we appear to create it for ourselves, and we know next to nothing about it. It is in the very air. Every advertisement writer is a dynamo. Some of them are short-circuited. Some of them emit only a

feeble spark. Some of them are eighty-newspaper power.

When an eighty-newspaper advertisement gets into a one-horsepower paper the current is too strong for the wire, isn't it? But it gets there somehow. Query: Can you knock down buyers better with an eighty-newspaper power advertisement in a one-horsepower paper than you can with a one-horsepower advertisement in an eighty-newspaper power paper?

Advertising is the master spirit of the age. Every nation, every race has its supreme art. The Greeks had architecture and sculpture and—Greeks! The Egyptians had undertaking and embalming. It was always a pleasure for any man to be an Egyptian, because he could still advertise himself after he died. Rome had law; we are subsisting upon the remnants yet. Most of them are pretty poor picking. America has advertising.

Yet nobody quite realizes the wonder of America's high art. We are using it so much we ought to know what it is doing to us.

What is it?

Advertising is bounded on the north by the North Pole, on the south by the South Pole, on the east by the East Pole, and on the west by the West Pole. You knew before that there are no East and West poles, didn't you? Well, that is advertising.

Advertising is telling a man about something he

either knows about already or wants to know about. Literature is the same thing. So advertising is literature and literature is advertising.

When advertising is not literature, it is not advertising. The test of literature is knowing what to omit. That is the test of advertising.

Bad advertising is trying too hard. It always has in it, somewhere, an unpleasant urge. Sometimes, however, you will buy an article in spite of the manner in which it is being advertised.

Good advertising is making it difficult for a man not to buy something which you have not told him he wanted, but have called to his attention.

Advertising is natural display. A beautiful girl does not hang a sign out, "Kissing Done Here." She goes out where the suitors are. She doesn't do much but sit still. She sits in the osculatory highway, where osculation merchants live and move and have their being.

She keeps pretty. She puts white margins around her to set herself off. She doesn't crowd and lean on the column rules. She doesn't keep repeating "I'm pretty." If she said that she looked pretty and she wasn't, would those osculation merchants be fooled? If she said, "Please come and kiss me; you'll find it to your advantage," would she gain anything by that? They know what she is by looking at her.

Eve was a good advertiser. When she handed

the apple to brother Adam, she didn't tell him it would make him a millionaire. She told him it would increase his knowledge, would give him a wider range. Eve could have sold encyclopaedias or motor cars.

Why did Adam take the apple? He was curious. Eve told him she could satisfy his curiosity. She did. Advertising, therefore, is satisfying curiosity. You do this by a display.

Advertising is *being there*. When a pretty girl advertises herself she has only two rules: The first is *be there*, the second is *get there*. Being there, therefore, is the most important thing about advertising. The good advertiser does only half the work. The man who buys meets him halfway.

Advertising—real advertising, not false—is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual conviction. The first requisite for a writer of advertisements, therefore, is that he shall be converted to the value of his product. He must experience it in just the way one experiences religion. No advertisement writer ought to try too hard to sell his wares. All he should do is to believe in them and write about them.

When a man buys a thing which you have shown that you are anxious to sell, it is because he wants it so much that he is willing to buy it in spite of the fact that you are so anxious to sell it.

To be a good writer of advertisements a man must know how to suffer and be happy. He must know enough to sympathize with the thing he is advertising. He must know even more—to believe it is the only thing being advertised. Too many advertisement writers are priding themselves that they are doing it better than the other fellow. Forget the other fellow. Keep your eyes in the boat.

Think of the articles back of some of the advertisements we see, and how they must suffer! Think of these perfectly good articles muttering to themselves and saying:

"Oh, if I could only get out and show them what I can do, instead of being poorly praised for so many of the things that people don't even want to know about."

There are three rules in writing advertisements:

The first is to know what you are talking about.

The second is to talk what you know about.

The third is to forget the first two.

The best rule in writing advertisements is to make them so interesting that people will read them.

Most people take periodicals for the advertisements that are in them. It is easy to prove this because periodicals that have the least number of advertisements are the least read. The best way to start any periodical, therefore, is to print only advertisements first and gradually lead up to the

reading matter. Make sure of your readers—after that you don't care what happens. You get a complete serial with every advertisement, plot, action, and all. You have confidence in the man who wrote it, because you know, not only that he gets paid, but he is interested in producing a definite result and he is doing his level best.

But the regular contributor who writes the reading matter may have made such a reputation beforehand that he doesn't care what kind of work he turns out. You like the advertisement writer's work because he is frankly prejudiced. Every advertisement writer believes in something. That is where he is always likely to have the advantage of the contributor. To be prejudiced in favour of your product is the first necessity of good writing. Macaulay was prejudiced. Jeremiah was prejudiced.

I have not yet fully explained what advertising is. I intended to do this, but I became so much interested in the subject that I forgot it. How often that happens with writers of real literature!

Advertising is personality combined with creative ability plus conviction and honesty.

Shakespeare recreated Hamlet from an old play and then advertised him in a new one. Most of the men who write advertisements get someone else first to manufacture their products for them. The day is coming, however, when the advertisement

writer may be such a supreme artist that a special article will be manufactured for him to write about, just as plays are now written for theatrical stars.

Shakespeare created his own product on the spot, while you waited. He was a good business man and made money by the sale of his products—Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, etc. Kipling found India already made, and advertised it and made money out of it. He laid a track from India to the reading public.

Ideas count, not methods or systems. Ideas spring from personality. Personality is hidden within the recesses of that singular creation, Man. For this reason, the human note tells most, in advertising as in all else. That is why the advertising artist must cultivate his spirit, not his mind. Emotion, sympathy, sentiment, feeling, and restraint: these are the concomitants of genius.

Now the best advertising, like the best literature, is the fruit of meditation. Every advertising writer should meditate upon his product, all ready to spring full-born from this supreme meditation. He must perceive its spirit and the idea back of it, whether it be a hundred-ton engine or a popgun. He must be in tune with the "infinite capacity for taking pains" back of it. He must become one with it. That is what makes the best advertising interesting reading. I read it because I perceive the man loves his idea. Maybe it isn't the best idea. But he loves it, he

has reduced it to its simplest terms. That is enough. He is never dull, because brevity is the soul of advertising and time and the column rule wait for no man. There is never, in advertising, any doubt what the man means. What a relief that, after reading so much of our current literature!

Advertising, in its highest form, is therefore only art. It is not an art of definition, but of display, just as Shakespeare displayed Hamlet or the Pennsylvania Railroad displays its station. You do not see signs over this station which read: "Oh, will you please enter here? This is the best station you ever saw, isn't it?" The magnificent thing stands for itself. So with all real advertising. There is no urge to it. The best advertisement in the world is the Sphinx, silent for countless centuries—a pure type of display.

The best advertising has only that insistence which comes from the perfection of display. If you want the article, the art with which it is presented must so impress you that when you need it, whether now or hereafter, you will know where it is. It is the highest form of persuasion, because the revelation of its merit is in its form. For this reason it needs not to carry any invitation. It is based upon the eternal principle that it would not first have been made if you did not want it.

FOUND

THERE was once a young man, Svetaketu Aruneya, who was unlearned in the things of this world, and he set out to discover the beautiful. He went to a sculptor, and to the sculptor he said:

"What is the most beautiful thing in the world?"

The sculptor took him into a studio and showed him an inchoate mass of marble upon which he had been working for some time, and he said:

"This is the most beautiful thing in the world."

Svetaketu Aruneya was not satisfied, and so he journeyed on and came to a young man like unto himself, and he said unto him:

"Tell me, I pray you, what is the most beautiful thing in the world?"

And the young man's eyes glowed with pride and he led him away to where a freckle-faced girl was tossing hay in the meadow. She had large ankles and her hair was frowzy and unkempt, and the young man said:

"There, O Student, is by far the most beautiful thing in the world."

But Svetaketu Aruneya was still not satisfied, and so he journeyed on to a city, and he came to the head politician, and he said:

"O Politician, tellest thou me what is the most beautiful thing in the world."

Thereupon the politician smiled and answered:

"O Son of Curiosity, that which is most beautiful is most invisible. That which has the truest curve and is most pleasing to the senses is that which one cannot behold."

Then the politician took him to the capitol, and he waved his arms and he said:

"The most beautiful thing in the world, O Earnest Young Man, is the last bill which I succeeded in getting through the Legislature."

Still Svetaketu Aruneya was not satisfied, and he left the city and wandered along the road, and at the foot of the hill he saw a small boy playing in the dust, and the boy's eyes were bright with a shining light. And Svetaketu Aruneya said to him:

"O Youth, so much younger than I, and in whom wisdom may therefore dwell, tell me, I pray you, what is the most beautiful thing in the world."

And the youth lifted his hand to the top of the hill, and the road went straight up and was lost beyond, and he drew his finger across the top of the hill, where the vanishing line of the road made its horizon, and he said:

"O Stranger, over there beyond that hill lies the most beautiful thing in the world."

"Are you sure?" asked Svetaketu Aruneya.

"I am sure," said the youth.

And Svetaketu Aruneya knew at that instant that what the youth said was true, and that the most beautiful thing in the world lay beyond the line of the road; yet he wanted to be sure, and he said again to the youth:

"I believe you when you say that the most beautiful thing in the world lies over beyond the line, but one more question: Have you been over there and seen it?"

"Not yet," said the youth.

AMONG THE POVERTY–STRICKEN MILLIONAIRES

A SOCIETY for the relief of New Yorkers who are getting incomes of fifty thousand dollars a year will soon have to be formed, or the nation must take the consequences. This is no joke. It is an intensely serious matter made more so by the general public ignorance with regard to the distressing conditions in which so many fifty-thousand-a-year families are living in New York.

Our people as a whole must be educated up to this problem. They must see it in its true light. Recent investigations among these poverty-stricken millionaires have shown that it is no longer possible for a family of six—husband and wife and four children—to subsist comfortably on fifty thousand a year. The figures speak for themselves. At present the poverty-stricken rich are not confined to any district. They are more or less scattered. Many of them reached their present condition from the comparative ease and comfort of fifteen a year. That they need help is without question. They are, of course, intensely proud. One has to approach them with tact. Fortunately it happens, however, that many

of them do not realize their state as they have never known another.

I have recently visited a number of these unfortunates in the hope of discovering some method of ameliorating their unhappy condition. Up to the present time no solution of the problem is in sight. But we must not despair. Time and patience are with us.

A typical case is that of Mr. and Mrs. E——, who live on the upper east side off Fifth Avenue.

I visited this family recently. The women were huddled over a bridge table in the second living room, talking fitfully to themselves, one of them trying to keep score with a pencil that had not been sharpened in several weeks. The place was fairly well heated, but pinched faces told the tale of undernourishment. One of the ladies had nothing to eat but lobster Newburg, chicken patties, and marron glacé for forty hours. She showed it. The weather has been quite severe, and I particularly noticed the absence of warm clothing. The eldest daughter, who might have been twenty-five, and who had been in her prime undoubtedly a handsome and well-favoured girl, was thinly clad in open-work stockings and some sort of filmy material that barely covered her neck and shoulders. These unfortunates are naturally sensitive to their hapless condition, so I had to be careful in approaching her.

"My child," I said, "when you go out into the cold air what you need is a union suit of some warm woollen material, or at least a flannel shawl to throw over your head. What I fear is that you are heedless about yourself."

"What do you expect me to do?" she said, petulantly, "spend my time in stopping up cracks in the limousine? It is true that I am still running along on last year's furs, and ostrich plumes and aigrettes, with the exception of a couple of toques, are the only headgear I have."

The mother of the family was even more obdurate.

"If you have come here to taunt us with some of the privations we are accustomed to endure, you might better be engaged elsewhere."

"I have not come to taunt you, but to help you," I said gently. "I am not going to offer you money, but sympathy and friendship."

"You'd better talk to my husband," she said, "and don't interrupt us. He's been looking for sympathy ever since we were married. You will find him in the library working over his income tax."

On my way to see what help I could render this unfortunate gentleman I ran across the butler who told me the worst. He stated that he hadn't been paid for three months.

"I 'aven't the 'eart to leave 'em, sir," he said.

"They're bearin' this 'igh cost of living so brave like, it do seem a pity to be 'indered by disloyal 'elp."

The husband, who evidently thought I had come to collect a bill, made a dive for the house elevator as I entered the room, and would undoubtedly have escaped had I not grabbed him in the nick of time. He was much shaken. He told me afterward that he had sat in a downtown broker's office for four days in succession without any one offering him even a club sandwich.

"As man to man," I said, forcing him into a chair and facing him, "Let us meet this thing together. Remember, you are not the only New Yorker who has to keep his growing family alive on fifty thousand a year. There are others. We must think of them. You are all in the same boat. If your problem can be solved it will also apply to them."

"I'll bet you're a Kansas or Missouri farmer," he said, "and have come here to gloat over my poverty. Or maybe you're one of those statisticians."

"I am only a simple-minded author," I replied, "and, therefore, not able to supply you with any amount of real money; but your secret is safe with me. Let us first get at the exact facts, and discover, if possible, what led you to this unfortunate state."

"It was due to my ability and my ambition, those twin deities of destruction," he replied, "if I hadn't trained myself to earn fifty thousand a year, all would

have been well. How happy we were," he added, "when we were only getting five."

"You could live on five thousand a year?" I ventured.

"Dear me," he replied. "Any family can live on five thousand a year—or less. But not fifty. As you begin to go up in the scale and your earning capacity increases, you reach the poverty line which—for a family of six—I should say is between fifteen and twenty thousand. Beyond that is misery, want, actual privation. Look at me. We haven't had a new car now in eight months and my butler"— he almost broke down—"hasn't——"

"Don't," I interrupted, soothingly, "I understand. The poor wretch confided in me as I came in. You mustn't let him get on your nerves. Come now, old fellow, brace up and tell me all. It will do you good to unburden yourself."

That was almost too much. Apparently no one had spoken a kind word to him in so long that it almost unnerved him. However, his voice grew stronger and he went on:

"I haven't always been a New Yorker," he began. "I was happy once. When I was getting only five thousand a year we were all comfortable because I didn't have to spend anything extra for what I was getting."

"I don't follow you," I said.

"It's perfectly simple. I have to pay for getting fifty thousand a year. They expect it. For one thing, we have to know a lot of people. That's what costs money. If I didn't know a lot of people I couldn't make fifty thousand a year and because I know them I can't live on it. I'm below the poverty line. Look at this house. If it isn't redecorated soon—it has been done once since last summer—all the people who know me will begin to think that I am short of money and this will queer me with the people who pay me fifty thousand a year."

"But don't they know you are short? You are all in the same boat, aren't you?"

He lowered his voice.

"Sh!" he said, "of course we know it. But we never admit it. All they do is whisper, because if they made too much of a fuss, they know it would impair my efficiency and might stop them from getting anything at all. You see how it works. It's a great system."

The poor man groaned. I joined him.

"I don't suppose fifty thousand a year gets anywhere with you," I said, thinking that by telling I knew how bad off he was, it would make him feel better.

"How can it?" he chattered. "Why, summer furs alone for three women will eat up one quarter of my income. The government takes about a third

of it. What's a thousand a week among six when a third and then a quarter is sliced off? To say nothing of help! We gave a dinner dance last week that cost five thousand and the missus said she was ashamed to look our guests in the face, it was so simple."

At this moment his wife and two daughters entered the room, their faces wreathed in smiles.

"Oh, papa," they chorused, "what do you think? We won eighty dollars!"

He turned to me and wrung my hand silently.

"You see," he said, "Providence does watch over the poor, after all. This will tide us over till tomorrow morning and perhaps pay the butler something on account."

And then secretly pressing a V into his hand, although I knew it was wrong, I left him and his flock to his fate.

THE SPRING EFFICIENT

THERE must be something wrong with science when it has not yet been able to produce an efficient spring.

Those of us who are thoroughly disorderly and irresponsible and reckless and exasperatingly careless, and wish to quote some high authority as an example, can point to Spring with superb confidence. Spring has no regard for anybody's feelings. She went out into Nature's backyard one day and got hold of the paint pot when the nice, orderly painter was away looking up the plans and specifications. She slammed the brush into the pot, and the April tears fairly running down her blooming cheeks with laughter, slapped on all the colours of the rainbow in all the places that you wouldn't think of—that you wouldn't dare think of.

No interior decorator to whom you pay a hundred dollars a day for his advice and presence and moral uplift would think of doing a thing like that. No colour scheme is safe with Spring. There are so many things the matter with her that we feel that it is something which we ought not to talk about.

It's bad enough to be disorderly, to be so utterly

regardless of all system, to defy all the rules of intelligent philosophers and other well-known experts; but Spring is much worse than this. She is an unmoral person. She would be arrested and locked up in Boston.

Spring makes her own clothes—and she never bought a sewing-machine on the installment plan or threaded a needle. They are always blowing off of her, and she's always slapping on new ones without the slightest regard to what's being worn. You never see her reading a domestic magazine or taking the dressmaking course in a woman's educational institute. She kicks off the coverlets, jumps out of bed, runs out of the house with scarcely anything on, and dresses shamelessly in the open. No wonder she draws crowds. And how she wastes!

Eventually, we feel certain, Spring will be under government control. All she needs is a little healthful preliminary publicity. Exposure will come once too often.

Science must do this for us. We need a few stirring and masterful articles on Spring by some leading college professors. No one would dream of instituting a great reform like putting Spring on a paying basis without first having it appropriately written up by a bevy of college presidents. The poets have tried it and failed. Poets have written about Spring so much that nobody now would believe anything

they said, even if it were true. That shows you how careful you must be in using your power.

Spring makes us shiver at the hopelessly irrelevant things she does. She needs to be taken in hand by some committee of representative citizens. Investigation by itself will do no good. Everybody has investigated Spring from time immemorial, and where are they?

But what may not be done with her by our modern machinery? Eugenics, college presidents, representative committees, editorial writers—with all this help, what cannot be done with Spring to make her a good citizen—if we get after her in due season?

PUTTING OUR LITERATURE ON A LITERARY BASIS. WELL, WHY NOT?

IT SEEMS quite a singular and unusual circumstance that among all the reforms that are now being evolved to make the human race in the United States any better, no attention has been paid to our literature. We have government ownership of railroads and stomachs, we have municipal surveys and multifarious educational innovations, which are modestly announced by their creators as continuously competent to produce infant phenomena at will. Even the circulation of our blood is supervised by boards of health, and immediately after the preliminary advertising and official announcement of every new disease, wide-awake doctors invent a new serum to cure it. Now to most of us it is commonly known that our desires originate in the mind. After the mind has let them loose, they start out upon the ignoble business of playing hob with the body. But it is only after this has taken place—when in fact the damage has been done—that our reformers step in and insist upon regulating the body—a method so extraordinarily stupid that nobody but man could have invented it. Meanwhile, the

mind is left to shift for itself, and having no rudder, soon becomes a derelict. Thus, as we walk up and down the beach of modern civilization, we see the flotsam and jetsam of countless minds, wrecked by newspapers, moving-pictures, and jazz bands.

There are some captious people who claim that, as we have no real literature, the imitation can scarcely be worth saving. But this is only the view of the so-called intellectual—a species of human being that lives on the high plateaus of alleged thought, jumps from paradox to paradox, and subsists largely on vers libre, cubisms, and other sterile combinations in restraint of common sense. We undoubtedly have a literature, but opinions differ as to what it is. Does it consist of the works of Edith Wharton, or of Robert W. Chambers? Is it something that can penetrate the mind of a congressman at a distance of 13,000 yards; or, at a distance say of ten goose steps, can excite the passionate admiration of the editorial staff of *The New Republic?*

"Literature," declares the versatile Mr. Webster, "is the total of preserved writings belonging to a given language or people." This is comprehensive and lucid. Those writings that are not preserved are evidently not literature. An ingenious American librarian has already undertaken to circumvent this by requesting authors to send him the original

manuscripts of their works for him to hand down to posterity. He has overlooked a fact that it is quite natural for an American librarian to overlook, namely, that literature is mental, not physical; and that it really consists of a body of words and phrases that are handed down by a very few of one generation to a very few of another; that are preserved in minds, and not on book-shelves. Some years ago I was interested to learn that there had been sold in this country two hundred and seventy-six copies of the "Upanishads," that work of Indian philosophy which Schopenhauer characterized as the finest reading in the world—a work that in the course of thousands of years has crossed the European continent, and although only one American in hundreds of thousands knows anything about it, will doubtless continue to live for thousands of years longer, when quite possibly Arthur Brisbane and Harold Bell Wright are forgotten.

So far as literature itself is concerned, it is largely a question of memory and hearsay—memory on the part of the few who keep it alive in their thoughts, and hearsay on the part of the many. There are undoubtedly people who still read Shakespeare. There are many who do not read him, but who would be outraged if you should ask them if they had ever heard of him. His is a familiar name to the American public, and is even known to members of the

theatrical profession; but along with many others in English literature who might be favourably mentioned, he is scarcely ever seen in congress.

We must undoubtedly be thinking of getting something together in this country that, in time, will take the place of the work of these English worthies of bygone days. Something must be done to put our literature on a posterity basis. It must be codified and assembled and systematized. Bernard Shaw has several times been requested to come over here and start a literature, but he has preferred to slam us at a distance. It is a curious fact that many of our natives who might have gotten our literature going, have given up the job and quit. There was Henry James who took up his residence in London, and even Mrs. Wharton appears to prefer Italy. We must do something to keep our prominent authors at home.

Nobody knows, of course, what our literature is going to be until afterward. And then it will be too late. Some hidden genius who is struggling along on five or ten thousand a year writing screen captions may become the Rochefoucauld of the future. The best we can do is to lay out a plan in which the whole realm of our literature may be duly surveyed and reorganized. Mr. Burleson, our official zonemaster, did what he could. He saw very clearly that our literature, such as it is, must be duly re-

stricted. His idea was that eventually, under our postal dispensation, a magazine containing certain embryonic gems of literature which starts out to a subscriber from the Atlantic coast will, by the time it reaches the Pacific, become a classic. Apparently he had not the same ideas as that divulged by an eminent Southern senator, who declared that his own state was fully capable of producing a literature of its own and wanted an embargo placed on all printed material coming from the outside world. Mr. Burleson did not go so far as this. He would not kill off all the magazines at once, the way the prohibitionists have done to the grape growers of California. He would let them live along for several years, meeting taxes and death on the instalment plan.

Certainly this method, while it may have its special merits, is applied at the wrong end. It delays until the raw material from which literature is eventually made has established itself; and then proceeds to throttle it; whereas a much simpler way is to guard the source and in the very beginning to admit nobody who doesn't show some signs of incipient literary talent. For example, what would be thought of the management of a club that admitted everybody to membership and after they were all in, went around and sandbagged all the undesirables? The correct thing to do with our literature is to begin

at the beginning, to have a properly organized department for the examination of those wishing to enter literature and to establish schools where they can be taught.

At present any one in America can be literary who wants to be without taking out a license. If the president of a bank or a packers' trust wishes to take a correspondence course in short-story writing, nobody can stop him. Any one can become a playwright or a professor of political economy in a western university, or if he wants to enter literature via *Scribner's Magazine*, can acquire a three months' residence at Princeton. Any one who has capital enough to hire a dress suit by the week and thus be able to appear at literary banquets, can become a publisher. Nature, it is quite true, often steps in and tries to preserve a certain balance, as when a writer of popular songs becomes so ambitious that he learns to read and write English, thereby drying up his inspiration and cutting off his income. But nature is no longer doing the great work that she did. Labour-saving devices and modern methods of efficiency are rapidly usurping her ancient privileges.

Before being permitted to enter literature, everyone should be officially examined, subjected to certain tests, and be required if necessary to furnish a bond for the keeping of the literary peace. It is true that in the past there have been a number of

really first-class authors who succeeded without this kind of supervision, but that is only because they were naturally so bright that nothing could stop them. Homer and Dante did as well as could be expected of them, considering that the first had to travel around without a portable typewriter and the second had to invent a hell of his own without any help from Billy Sunday. Consider, however, what they might have done if before turning out their gems of thought they could have taken the Harvard dramatic course, matriculated from the school of journalism at Columbia, met Amy Lowell, or lived in Kansas.

The great trouble with our present system is, not that it isn't efficient, but that it has not been duly cöordinated and brought under the control of authority. Literature in America is now in much the same condition that our railroads were before the Government took them over. That is to say, it is prosperous, at least to a degree. It is an affair of private enterprise, its proletariat not yet having developed enough mentality to adopt a defensive system of union labour. No Samuel Gompers has risen among us, although I am bound to say that Ellis Parker Butler has done the best he could. Nobody ever hears of the joke writers going out on strike; these poor wretches are not even organized, the nearest approach to such a thing being the annual meeting of the newspaper humourists, a sort of clear-

ing house of melancholy. Immense profits are made by a few writers on top, who have either struck the rock of cheap sentiment and made it gush forth its thousands, or who are living a life of shame under Hearst. The rank and file are, as I have intimated, constantly increasing, lured on by literary agents and the horrible fascination of seeing one's name in print.

As to the ultimate solution of this problem of putting our literature on a literary basis, modesty prevents me from setting forth too rashly a definite programme of reconstruction. We must move slowly. I suggest first a preliminary meeting of psychologists. Any one hereafter who wishes to enter our literature should be subpœnaed to appear before these gentlemen and be subjected to the Binet test. If in sixty seconds he can distinguish red from green or blue from yellow, can repeat "The Star-Spangled Banner," the Gettysburg Address, and the Covenant of Peace, admits that he admires publishers and proof-readers, has never heard of the word *meticulous*, and is living on good terms with his wife, then he should be thrown out. He is not fit to enter American literature.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF A NOVEL?

THIS IS SOMEWHAT SERIOUS. WELL, WHY NOT?

"DO YOU know of a good book?" is probably the most frequent question asked by the average person in search of the mental recreation that comes from reading. The answer to this question does not lie in any analysis of novel writing from the standpoint of the author. The reader is the one who creates the demand. What does he want? That is the standpoint to be considered first.

And the first thing that suggests itself is that, as the standpoints of readers vary according to their environment and culture, there can be no standard by which a "good" book can be judged. If this is true there would be no case. We should have to stop short. But experience shows that there is an extraordinary agreement about certain books among a large variety of readers. Experiments by librarians have brought out the fact that people who patronize a library rather aimlessly, and have no well-defined standards of their own, will begin first on the lower order of books, but will gradually, of their own

accord, gravitate to higher levels. They will first be attracted by the good story, and that it is crudely written will not trouble them. Little by little, however, they acquire the rudiments of a taste that constantly tends to make them more careful in their selections.

But if this is true on the part of the most uncultivated readers, on the other hand it is also true that the most cultivated people, especially if their lives are greatly occupied, will often seek lower levels in search of that kind of abstraction that comes from a story of action. Thus we have Justices of the Supreme Court reading dime novels with avidity; we have Macaulay devouring this kind of literature. Ex-President Wilson himself has confessed to this sort of dissipation.

There must, then, be a sort of middle ground where these two extremes meet; and it is to this middle ground that I would direct attention.

Dismissing those so-called "deeper" books that deal with history, philosophy, and science, many of which are read by large numbers of people, let us confine ourselves to fiction; and in fiction novels easily fall into three groups:

1. The character novel, in which everything else is subordinated to the delineation of certain types of human beings. These types are by no means photographic studies of real people, but are almost in-

variably the author's reactions to his own artistic sense of life. The novels of Henry James and George Meredith fall within this class. The people they portray are "built up" with a literary skill proceeding from the author's creative ability plus his conformity with the true principles of art, which hold good no matter in what field these principles may be expressed. For these same principles apply in music and painting and the drama.

2. The story of action, in which everything else is subordinated to the story itself, scarcely any attempt at art being displayed in the delineation of character and everything being levelled down to the course of the story, the construction of which must, from beginning to end, be without any unnecessary impediment, so that the reader is carried on unconsciously, his attention held by a continuous sense of mystery, until the *dénouement* comes. It should be observed that this kind of story ends with the book itself. The reader sighs, wishes that it might have been longer, is grateful that while reading it he has completely forgotten himself, and then proceeds to forget the book. A few weeks later it is extremely doubtful if he can tell anything about it.

3. *The great novel*, in which these two forms are blended into a whole. This occurs so rarely as to make the great novels extremely scarce, and even at that the great novels have blemishes. Fielding's

"Tom Jones" is considered by leading critics to be the greatest English novel. It wanders along, from the modern reader's standpoint, rather aimlessly. Nevertheless, it is one of the world's greatest novels, with the story element true to life and the character element true to literary art. To many lovers of Jane Austen her novels not only depict life true to literary art, but contain enough of a plot to carry them home. They may be read and reread with increasing pleasure, and this in spite of Mark Twain and Mrs. Atherton. Yet there is no sense of excitement about them, slight incidents serving, because the author knows how to handle them, to create a dramatic interest.

In modern life Joseph Conrad's novels rank very high, yet there are many readers for whom they contain no interest. These readers do not rise to their story-telling power, and are cold to their characterization and fine English. This is due to Conrad's method of delineation, which he has developed from his own individual standpoint and which he has had to force gradually upon the attention of a growing body of readers.

This leads me to group novels in two other ways. First, the novel of pure entertainment, and, second, the novel of moral depth. Conrad's novels are of the second type, are essentially allegories. They treat of man's struggle against the elemental forces of

nature, and unless the reader himself has developed a genuine sense of the difference between the moral and the purely material he is almost sure to miss Conrad entirely. To read one of Conrad's books purely for entertainment, just as one reads a detective story, is utterly to misunderstand it. When a novelist has this sense of moral values, that is, when he is deeply imbued with man's eternal struggle against the powers of darkness, the value of his art depends upon how he can tell his story in such a way as to keep up the interest without leaning too far in the other direction. That is the main difficulty with so many of the so-called problem novels. They are frankly nothing but propaganda, and that is always bad art. Dickens was enraged against some of the grossest abuses of his age, but, being a great artist, he was able to tell his story and keep the attention of the reader while bringing home his lesson.

But these two types may be combined. Take the historical novel, which has four elements, for it must not only tell a story and delineate character, but it must be sufficiently accurate to contain a correct idea of the age of which it treats, and in addition it may treat of the interplay of moral forces and bring home a great lesson. To those who know nothing of Rome and care less, Hawthorne's "Marble Faun" would lose a large part of its remarkable atmosphere and quality, although without this knowledge it would

of course carry home its charm. To American readers more or less familiar with the history of their own country "The Scarlet Letter" would, however, be better understood.

Briefly, if the modern novelist is concerned only with the sale of his books, his problem is to avoid anything that taxes too much the minds of his readers, the great mass of whom desire to make no effort in reading a book, but prefer that the author should do all the work. Thus a novelist who deals with a strange people must—from this standpoint—recreate them in such a way that the reader is not made to feel that he is being fed up with history. That is why the popular novelist writes of the things and the people everybody knows about. When he is a great novelist, however, this is by far his best medium. It is probable that if Mr. Conrad could have written of things nearer home his audience would have been more responsive. In reading his stories the reader is always repaid for the trouble he takes; but in the case of Dickens, no matter if he descends to pathos, or how torrential may be the stream of his book, the reader is carried along in a kind of swirl of humour and description and delightful surprises, and doesn't care much what happens to him. Mr. De Morgan's books contain a wealth of observation and delightful writing, but there is little order about them, and they miss fire from a lack of the principles under-

lying all art. To those who claim that art is nothing but personality I would proclaim an immediate objection, for art is not alone personality, but it must be founded on a technique requiring even from genius itself a long apprenticeship. The history of all great artists is the history of one long struggle to achieve perfection.

The reader, therefore, in his search after the "good book," must begin with a definite idea of what he really wants. If his sole purpose is to pass away a certain period of time without any other result than to tide himself over that period, then he is apparently hopeless so far as good literature is concerned. But as I have intimated in the beginning, even at that he is doing something, for as he plunges, one after another, into a number of exciting books that have only a story value and make no claims on his attention other than to keep him riveted to the spot while he is reading them, he is still bound, in the very nature of the case, to institute unconscious comparisons. He will discover that the "trashy" books are all of them built on the same formula, and, still quite unconsciously, he will discover that one of them is better written than another. At this point, in spite of himself, his sense of discrimination is aroused, and he is then on the path to better things. His next step will be the discovery that with books of genuine value the reader himself must always contribute

something. He must exercise a certain patience and restraint, and must come to feel that there may be much more in the turn of a phrase, or in the background which, for a certain purpose, the author creates, than he at first suspected. In short, the reader must help the author by taking the time and thought to understand him. Snap judgments of a book, based on the fatal habit of skimming it over, are too common.

And still beyond the literary art displayed, the reader's own fundamental experience with life itself will be put to the test. If he discovers nothing in Conrad or Kipling beyond the story, about the telling of which there may be a divergence of opinion among those who think they know a story as a story, then he has still missed much, because he himself has missed many of the fundamental experiences of life.

JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY is the feeling you have when someone you think belongs to you is believed by you to be appropriated by somebody else.

When you are jealous at first your heart begins to work like a one-cylinder motor car going up Pike's Peak. Your eyes flash fire, your face grows hot, and by a swift process of the mind all the murderous instincts you have anywhere in your system are mobilized and concentrated. After this your eyes become fixed and glassy, and you spend your waking hours in muttering to yourself and your nights in clutching the sheets, starting up in bed, and hissing able-bodied curses at the bedposts.

To be a genuine success, jealousy should not have an actual object. When there is really somebody to be jealous about, one half of the reasons why you are jealous are removed, because this makes your jealousy about one half reasonable. When any jealousy begins to have a reason, the fun of possessing it is quite largely diminished. First, then, get an imaginary object to be jealous about, changing it to suit the taste.

To be highly efficient and cause you the maximum

amount of trouble, your jealousy should be fairly well controlled, in just the same way that your furnace will burn up the greatest amount of coal when the draughts are turned on enough to make the consumption continuous.

There is no cure for jealousy except marriage. Do not, however, marry the person you are jealous about. Marry somebody else.

Then, about ten years later, when sitting in the club after your divorce, maybe you will see the former loved one passing by with a group of seven children and the villain who caused your jealousy wheeling one of the baby-carriages. Then you can go to sleep with calm assurance that you have gotten even with him in the only way possible.

HOW TO KNOW THE WILD PSYCHOLOGISTS

A BRIEF AND FAIRLY RELIABLE ACCOUNT OF A GREAT MOVEMENT

ONE balmy morning in May, 1901, a group of earnest psychologists sat on the porch of a modest dwelling in Cambridge, Mass. Harvard College could be dimly seen in the distance. Amy Lowell, as yet unknown, unhonoured and unsonged, was just getting up, and, bending over a large tub of free verse, was wringing it out joyously.

Caleb V. Splinters, than whom there was no greater psychologist, had been sitting for some time in gloomy silence, which, to his comrades in obscurity, was evidence that an idea was forming itself upon the pellucid surface of his virtuous mind. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, and there were those who fancied that a gleam of real intelligence came from his eyes.

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed, "psychology must come to its own. Here we are, masters of thought, no one of us earning more than twelve hundred a year. Look at the fringes on these garments of mine. I tell you we must lift up psychology into a higher realm."

"Comrade," asked Boreum Nureetus, another king of the mind, "into what realm would you lift it? Speak freely. If you can put psychology on a financial basis, we are with you to a man."

"Lift it into the realm of advertising," replied Caleb V. Splinters, a crafty smile illuminating his cheerful countenance. "For, unless my reflexes are all wrong—and I went over them with a monkey-wrench only this morning—it is in this realm of advertising that we can do our big work."

"What must we do?" asked Herr Von Bulow Spittendorf, a third master mind, who, having been imported from Berlin, was munching idly a hot dog. "It costs money to advertise," he added, warily.

"Not if we play the game right. We will get the advertisers to advertise us, and they won't even know they are doing it, because we will make it evident to them that only through our methods can they write advertising. This, gentlemen, is the psychological moment for putting something over on the great financial geniuses of the advertising world—empurpled magnates, who roll about in their limousines, while we, fit to mingle with corporation heads, live on half-portions of shredded wheat."

"Speak, master," they chorused.

Caleb V. Splinters drew from his pocket a paper that, having been evolved from his inner consciousness, was yet damp with the association of axones.

"Listen, friends," he said. "Unless my static sense deceives me, there is a fortune in this for each one of us, and see if you don't think I know how to lure the wily advertiser from his lair."

He read as follows:

"The best time to rest is after a period of work.

"Fatigue is produced by exertion.

"The best advertising depends upon association of ideas. Example: If you see an elephant, you will know there is a baggage-car ahead. An elephant has a trunk. Hence baggage."

"It is just as well," Caleb Splinters here interrupted himself, "to introduce into your copy a little humour. If expressed in simple language, many of the advertising writers understand it, and it makes them cheerful.

"Complexes start from simplexes.

"Every advertisement is conveyed to the brain of the prospective buyer through his retina. Make your appeal, therefore, to the retina, and ignore the rest of the prospective buyer.

"If a man wants a thing he is more likely to buy it than if he doesn't want it."

These and many more epoch-making maxims, now familiar to the advertising world, fell from the lips of Caleb V. Splinters. As he concluded, an awed silence fell upon the little group.

"Wonderful!" cried Boreum Nureetus, who in his

younger days had once acted as a messenger in a Government bond issue affair and saw the limitless financial possibilities. "Some one of us must bend to the task of writing a masterpiece on the psychology of advertising, and someone else must start a correspondence school of applied psychology, and the world is before us."

Thus the great movement began. The little band scattered to their then humble dwellings, and the world of advertising caught psychology.

It would seem that the great truths which sprung —or sprang—from the master minds of this little band of pioneers are so familiar as scarcely to be worth repeating. But it would be dishonourable for us not to repeat them occasionally, if only to show where the credit lies. For instance, we have now learned from psychology that if you wish to sell an article it is not well at first to mention the price, because this may awaken painful memories in the mind of the buyer. The cortex is unpleasantly affected, and when you get a man's cortex going the wrong way you never can tell what he will do. The cortex is located somewhere in the upper part of the body, north of the stomach, and bearing about east-northeast from the fissure of Rolando. It should be gently stroked and kept in good humour by means of sensory impressions, which, having their source in the advertisement itself, rise often

abruptly and proceed in a horizontal direction—unless the buyer is reading in bed—until joined at their conflux by the genetic or impure reading matter, thus forming one of those deltas of the consciousness which ultimately separates the buyer from his wad.

Another reason why these truths cannot be repeated too often is that new generations of advertising writers are constantly rising and need to be informed about what we psychologists are doing. If you have never tamed a subgemmal cell, taught an intergemmal fibril to eat out of your hand, or housebroken a wild neurone, where are you going to get off?

We have now learned that if you wish to print an advertisement that any buyer can understand, you must print it in type large enough for him to read. This is known as the Caleb Splinters first law of infraction. To achieve his marvellous results Professor Splinters got twenty-two volunteer buyers and hermetically sealed them in a glass case, kindly loaned by the hygienic department of Yale University, so that he could keep them under close observation. He then fed them daily on segments of the advertising section of the popular magazines interspersed with bits of the *Congressional Record* and the *Author's League Bulletin*, making hourly observations. From his intensely interesting report we are able to glean

the following data: At the end of the first forty-eight hours only one and one half per cent. of the buyers could see at all, the rest being totally blind. He then restored them—at the end of another forty-eight hours—by substituting for the *Congressional* a few pictures of Theda Bara and some Paris posters.

Splinters has contributed this great discovery to the world free of charge.

"I have money enough of my own," he says. "Why profiteer?"

His reply has caused considerable surprise, but would that his patriotic example might be followed by others, who, alas, may not be so familiar with the psychology of advertising as they ought to be.

A DELICATE SUBJECT

I APPROACH a subject so delicate and dangerous that the mere thought of it makes me shiver with apprehension. To be brutally blunt, and not to keep the jaded and more or less tax-ridden reader in suspense, it is the great question as to what the girls are wearing.

I am neither for nor against women's clothes. There are occasions when it is best to stand pat. Perhaps because of our variable climate, or possibly because we are slaves to habit, we all wear clothes. To begrudge any girl in these days the little she may have on seems to me ungenerous. Women have always worn clothes—more or less—and whether it is more or less seems to depend on the way they feel about it.

There are many learned and otherwise important men who seem to feel that the girls, take them by and large, are not wearing so many clothes—or perhaps I could say enough clothes. So far as is known by careful observation there is no general feeling of complaint that the girls are spending too little on their clothes. Rather the contrary. But there seems to be a disposition to feel that in propor-

tion to the actual money spent there is not enough surface covered.

But clothes are not achieved that way. They are bought not so much on account of their total acreage as because of their concentrated power to divert and attract. Abbreviation in clothes appears to be an important principle in the art of displaying them. As Robert Louis Stevenson once said about literature, the great thing is knowing what to omit.

All women are beautiful if viewed from a proper distance, and as we timidly approach them many women grow more so. And everywhere there are girls—short girls and tall girls, poor girls and rich girls; girls with fluffy hair and girls with curls. The number of girls turned out in this country alone in one year is astounding, and would be incredible if we didn't actually see them around. Millions of them! They come from everywhere. You cannot take a walk in any state without meeting them. Cities teem with them—girls in offices, girls in homes, girls in factories and farms. We even see girls occasionally in kitchens. If you didn't see them everywhere you go—nothing but freckled boys and homely men, nothing but fat profiteers and tired business nonentities—how would we feel about that? In the streets there would be no colour, except possibly an occasional red cravat, and what would be the use of wearing even a red cravat if there were nobody

but coarse men to admire it? And then—quite aside from the mere appearance of things—there are emotional girls, girls who don't know their own minds and those that do; cold and haughty girls; and girls with affectionate and glowing natures.

All this being freely admitted, is it proper for us men, who, anyway, cannot afford to take any superfluous time from the job of making enough money to pay for the ladies' clothes—is it proper for us weaklings, I say, to do anything about these clothes?

The fact that we know nothing about a woman's clothes, and couldn't tell a georgette crêpe de meteor from a pea green Nile taffeta chassis, is nothing against us. We don't know anything about women anyway. A great many of us also have gotten so that we don't know any too much about running our own business, and have to call in an efficiency expert or a memory shark to bolster up our minds. Indeed, the ordinary man of affairs will soon have to be fed with a spoon and a guardian appointed over him to get him back and forth safely from his home to his office.

So that we mustn't be discouraged if we don't know how to tackle the problem of women's clothes, or don't even know whether it is best to try it or not.

The thing to do is to appoint a committee. When in doubt about anything always appoint a committee. And we mustn't be afraid to put the women them-

selves on it. When in a large, general and, I may say, national manner, the responsibility is put right up to the women themselves, they rarely fail us.

As soon as the committee is formed, out of it will, of course, come two parties—a clothes party and an anti-clothes party. This would start something, and maybe we need that.

Lest it still be thought, however, that the girls themselves would not be fair, it is only necessary to us men to know that the project of a regular uniform for women was actually started some time ago by one of them—and fell flat. Doubtless it didn't have the hidden support of enough men. I suspect, indeed, that men are themselves at the bottom of all this recklessness and irresponsibility in the wearing of clothes among women. I really suspect that the men like it. They may protest that they don't, but a distinguished expert has long ago declared that all men are liars anyway.

High-heeled slippers and short skirts, topped off by woollen mosquito nets that any able-bodied mosquito could crawl through with ease—there must be some encouragement to wear these interesting things from a whole lot of innocent-looking men, or else the girls would be wearing mother hubbards, or some thing equally voluminous. This whole question, therefore, comes back to the girls themselves; it is not only on their backs—if it can be said that any-

thing is on their backs nowadays—but in their hands. We cannot do anything about it. Some of us have tried, and miserably failed. Up to the present hour of writing the bargain counter has held its own with the pulpit and the rostrum.

The committee in charge of this whole matter should undoubtedly be composed entirely of women and it should be fairly representative of all classes and sections. There should be a nice little city girl who lives in a hall bedroom and has a romantic soul, and who wears clothes for the fun of it. There should be not more than one society queen, also a golf lady, a suburban matron, an actress, just a frivolous girl who has money, a woman lawyer, a woman author, a woman politician, and a couple of elderly spinsters.

There would probably be some slight discussion, and possibly some hair pulling on the committee before they came to a final agreement.

We men should keep out of it, and abide by the consequences, fatal or otherwise. The most that we could do would be to make a few modest recommendations.

Personally I am in favour of some variety, and shameless as this may seem, I am not strong for a uniform with brass buttons. But a trained nurse costume has its merits and breeds a proper spirit of romance. Also I like a little colour if it is laid on right.

"Success in the art of being beautiful," declares Rebecca West, "seems always a matter of individual inspiration."

There is much truth in that observation. No committee can afford to overlook it.

If all women looked the same—as most men do—it might be highly detrimental to a continuous democracy. We should then have to select our wives according to their weight and height and abilities. Love would gradually be reduced to a syllogism. Love is expensive and is undoubtedly the cause of much trouble. If it could be abolished by act of Congress or by having all the girls look alike we might be able to give a little more attention to our conduct.

WANTED: A SECRETARY OF ATHLETICS

OUR presidential campaigns have become so uninteresting that something ought to be done to lift them up into the same moral atmosphere as golf or Kelly pool. The vice-presidency itself, that glorious bulwark of democracy, isn't absorbing nearly so much of our energies as it ought to, having about the same general consistency as a shuffleboard championship. If our leading politicians could be given a rubdown and a turn-over in the swimming tank every day, it wouldn't matter greatly if the water had to be changed once or twice a week. The expense would be nothing in a case like this.

There are moderately strong men all over this country, with idealistic mud-guard shoulders that slope gracefully into the domestic underworld, who are now taking secret systems of home exercise, who ought to be exposed and made to do some real work.

We already have a Secretary of Agriculture whose business it is to provide us every spring with enough hard seeds to keep the rain from washing out our driveways. Unless we have a Secretary of Athletics, the few of us who still have brains enough to cast a

vote won't have strength enough left to get within a hundred feet of a ballot box.

This is a serious situation. Suppose you are still—by some chance—at the head of the plant that you once owned, and want to borrow a couple of millions from the men who are running it, and haven't anything left but brains to do it with? It would appear as if there were a number of people left over from the war who still believe that brains are of some value in running a business. This only goes to show how hard it is to get any idea of progress into our heads. But a Secretary of Athletics would put us on the right basis. He would give the business men of this country, who have been blindly leaning on their brains to run their affairs, a chance to rise to the level of the men they employ.

It will take time to do this. Before any of us can get so that we can work in a coal mine eight or nine hours a day without fatigue, we shall have to start in gently with parchesi, plain knitting, and parlour putting, and work up through basket ball, ping pong, and croquet until we can get so that we can skin the cat in the garage, and if need be, help the wife put on a tire.

A great future awaits us poor old business boobs, with nothing but brains and experience to support us, if we did but know it. And by this time, strange as this may seem, we ought to be receiving some encouragement from the government. We don't want

too much. Not being used to it, it ought to come in small doses at first. The first Secretary of Athletics need not necessarily be able to do the giant swing, or ride an army mule around the Washington Monument with one foot in the air. But at least he should be able to do the Capitol once a week and see that the dumbbells and Indian clubs are all in order, without being taken around in a wheeled chair. If, when we are obliged to travel on one of our railroads, we may be called upon at any moment to man the engine, or to unload a freight car filled with perishable goods and get them to the nearest profiteer, we ought to feel that the government is, in a way, behind us. At present, such is our hopeless condition, it is doubtful if we could get any man broadminded enough to be a Secretary of Athletics.

Even supposing that he had been born originally in a caddie house, and had worked on a links all his life, and had never done anything intelligent enough to make it count against him as a candidate, he would be almost certain to be non-committal on the main issues. Having read the newspapers, the party platforms, the senatorial debates, and the movie announcements of coming films for the past few years, he would have no opinions of his own. He would say:

"I believe in a league of nations, with proper reservations, provided that the basket ball averages

are kept up and our business interests are kept down to one per cent. American F. O. B. Detroit, and all the lost golf balls shall be distributed equally among those glorious heroes who having offered up their lives and what spare cash they had for their country, are now roaming around looking for jobs. And provided, further, that all other candidates may come out with a full, frank statement such as this is, irrespective of any condition of servitude in which at present they may be basking."

Always when we are in despair, however, we are somehow able to pull the country through and to get someone to act as substitute for the real thing. The main point is to get almost any one as Secretary of Athletics to begin on, and then we can gradually work the department up to a fairly respectable basis, even if Bryan or Dempsey, or Harold Bell Wright won't serve.

Getting a new department started is not so difficult as it may seem to us who know so little about our government and wish we knew less. All you have to do is to send word to your local congressman. Do not meet him personally, as this might create a coolness between you that would conserve no worthy cause anyway. If you have never learned his name, consult the nearest drug store. Then phone, wire, send him a special delivery, or use any other dishonourable means to get at him that may occur to you.

Tell him that you are one of his numerous constituents, and this will awaken what sympathy he may have left over from the last caucus.

If everybody does this the president will be obliged by the mere force of public opinion to appoint a Secretary of Athletics.

With a Secretary of Athletics sending us pamphlets on home training in every mail, we can look forward to our future universal business decrepitude with the feeling that, at any rate, we did have an opportunity to keep ourselves in fair physical condition.

ON THE RECOMMENDING OF BOOKS

DO YOU know of anything good to read? . . . Even should you be only an occasional reader of books—an intermittent dabbler in catching titles and literary colour schemes—even then the occasion arises when you will be forced to answer this question. But if you be the more or less apprehensive possessor of a library of your own—with your ears up all the time listening for the approaching footsteps of some shameless borrower—then, indeed, your responsibility is acute. What you do or don't know about a particular book may determine your future relationship to some friend who—aside from his or her literary idiosyncrasies—is for the present the best friend you have.

Somebody is always asking someone at some time if he knows of a good book to read. To say the right thing, either about the right or wrong book, to either the right or wrong person, is an intellectual diversion of no mean proportions.

And the attack is as likely as not to come suddenly, when you are off your guard. You cannot parry it without a sense of evasion. Besides, you may not

want to parry it. You may have sat up in bed half the night before reading a tome that makes the celebrated ride of Prince Kamar Al-Akmár on his enchanted horse seem dull in comparison. Yet even this has its dangers, for our literary enthusiasms often have to be lived down in deep humiliation.

After having been reading it the previous week with great exultation of spirit, I once remarked to a casual acquaintance that the "Confessions of St. Augustine" was one of the greatest books in the world; an opinion which time has failed to modify. He solemnly jotted the title in his note-book, to my immediate consternation. But it was too late to back down. The suspicion with which he afterward came to regard me was not allayed by the reckless recommendation as "light reading" of that delightful detective thriller of Sax Rohmer's, "Dope." For my acquaintance I was thereafter a literary outcast.

Then there is the discriminating intellectual fiend who prides himself on his taste, and who feels no doubt that he is cleverly flattering you in asking you the fatal question. You are never sure of what he likes, because the thing you have declared good he straightway announces is intolerable. You wonder why he continues to consult you, and no doubt have an instinctive feeling that he is only doing it to show you up. You find yourself adding to your

statement—"That is, if you feel like that kind of a book," thus hoping to get back at him by the subtle intimation that if he doesn't like it there must be something wrong with him.

And the ladies! Caught in an attack of Ibsen fever, I stated to a charming and highly domesticated specimen who talked somewhat intelligently of the modern drama—if anybody does—that the "Doll's House" was "an epoch-maker." But she returned to me later with the fundamental observation that no woman in her right mind would have done as Nora did. Another lady of similar proclivities asked me if "The Moon and Sixpence" was the kind of a book that one "ought" to read. In a moment of self-admired caution I said No—with the qualification that in some respects it was a great book. She got it, and reproached me with my recommendation, declaring that it was quite horrid. I have no doubt that to this day she is convinced that I am a morbid and thoroughly irresponsible critic.

It may not be out of place here, if for nothing else than to increase our efficiency, to give a list of phrases to be used by timid people when recommending books to inquiring friends:

"It is a good book, but I am bound to say that the reading of it depends upon your mood."

"You couldn't do better—that is, if your only object is to pass the time."

"Everybody is reading it. But that may not mean anything to you."

"In case you don't like it, please don't blame me."

If your friend is a chronic borrower, however, and you purposely wish to insult him, the following defensive phrases may be used as occasion warrants. But upon all other occasions they should be carefully avoided:

"I couldn't afford to spend the time reading it. But it's just the book for you!"

"It's badly written, but a good story. I'm sure you will like it."

"There's nothing to it—but you may get a lot out of it."

"It's a fascinating book for an idle hour—if you know how to skip. It ought to amuse you for a couple of days."

"You certainly ought to read it; it will give you an entirely new point of view."

"It will give you something new to talk about."

I once overheard a young woman who sat back of me at Walter Hampden's "Hamlet" declare that it was evident that Polonius didn't know his part, he repeated himself so much. But if that had been said by a well-read gentleman of fifty or more, in the right company, it would doubtless have been received with smiles. The problem, therefore, seems to depend upon one's age, one's standing, and one's

company. But was it not a nice old lady at Ruskin's, in an endeavour to mitigate one of those dreadful pauses that sometimes occur even among the elect, who suddenly remarked that "the Bible was such a good book!"

ON THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF HUMOUR

A LITTLE ASIDE TO COLLEGE BOYS

THERE is nothing more serious than the profession and practice of humour. Good comedy is rarer still. There are only a comparatively few nations that support even one comic paper. Both humour and comedy are so rare that it is extremely hard to define them. Few have succeeded in doing this. They constantly evade you.

This is a practical article, however, and not intended to deal in abstractions. I shall get down to business at once. In speaking about so-called comic journalism I shall have to do it in my own way, just as it happens.

The first thing that occurs to me is this: You cannot force yourself to write humour. It has got to be in you. How can you tell when it is in you? I don't know. It is a kind of playful feeling that steals over you. It's a feeling of detachment. You detach yourself even from yourself. Then, of course, you must acquire skill in doing it. People who have a genuine sense of fun and comedy may be compared to a man with a flying machine who has not learned

how to run it. At first he is very awkward and bumps around a great deal. Later on, when he is looping the loop, you wonder how he does it so well, but the chances are that, in addition to his training, he had a talent for it from the beginning.

I have been reading manuscripts from would-be humorous writers for twenty-five years, and can generally tell when they have any talent, almost at first sight. It is the way a thing is put that counts, and this comes from a combination of personality and an unknown something, difficult to describe. It is a common mistake to suppose that if a thing is "funny" it is necessarily humorous. I send back a lot of things that are "funny" because they are common in style, or have a tinge of vulgarity about them. I think it is true that the best wit and humour among amateurs comes out of the colleges and the college papers. The reason for this, I take it, is that the boys who go to college have had the advantage of good homes, they have acquired manners, and manners are immensely important. The moving picture people tell me that the hardest thing is to get someone to take the part of a gentleman. Manner is acquired only under certain conditions, and humour is born of a critical instinct, plus sympathy. Perhaps "good fooling" is the expression that covers it best. You must be mentally at ease—more or less confident of yourself, yet tolerant.

People who have a sense of humour have difficulty in getting on with those who have not, and the difference is often one of environment. For example, a friend of mine was called up during the war by a man over the telephone, who wanted him to subscribe for a fund for the aid of superannuated Baptist ministers. "Good Heavens," exclaimed my friend, "Why should we keep them alive?" The man was offended, yet my friend was only being playful with an idea, which would have been perfectly understood by any one in his own atmosphere. As a matter of fact, I believe he subscribed to the fund.

Real humour is extremely rare. That is evident upon reading any humorous paper. The good editor knows this and does not strain to get it. He makes the most interesting, playful paper he can, never hesitating to be serious so long as he isn't dull or long, and then trusts to luck to get his occasional gem. To do this he never misses anything that comes to him. This may surprise some of those critics who think that editors read only the manuscripts of a favoured few and send back the rest without a glance. Personally, I seem to be doing nothing but reading manuscripts all the time. I know most of the successful editors, and they are all doing the same thing. I read mine over and over; if I am in doubt, I hand them to a number of people for their opinion. I often read my selections aloud to get the effect.

Occasionally in the night I wake up in horror at the thought of some manuscript that may be better than I thought it was, and should have been accepted. I am bound to say, however, that this occurs very seldom, because it is so extremely difficult to get anything good, that I seem always to be falling back on things *not* so good.

The most difficult thing to achieve in writing humour is brevity. Often I get manuscripts pages long written around an idea which could have been put into two lines. In writing humour, it is your vocabulary that counts. The force of a single word, in the right place, is potential; it cannot be over-estimated. The best humour is, of course, moral; that is, it goes below the surface. Its force lies not always in the laugh but in the recollection. One is required to have lived, to know life at first hand, to have reflected upon the causes of things from one's individual standpoint.

You must have principles to be a humourist. Then from the standpoint of your principles, you are struck by the absurdity, by the incongruity, by the positive injustice of a certain thing. Being a gentleman, being inured to the inevitable, being under control, you do not lose your temper over this thing. You do not rant at it like a Bolshevist; you take it up gently and begin to poke discreet fun at it. There is an obligation on your part to be

fair; that doesn't mean that you may not exaggerate, that you may not be even reckless, but O, it's the way the thing is done. You are really in sympathy with it.

Perhaps, after all, that is the explanation. You put yourself in the place of those you are laughing at. This is the basis of the dialogue, or joke—those things you see under pictures in comic papers, and which—from the editor's standpoint—are so extremely hard to get. I read hundreds of them every week, almost always in despair, occasionally in the lofty joy of having gotten something really good.

You know Du Maurier of *Punch* used to write these things on slips of paper as they came to him, and put them into a teapot on one of his shelves. Afterward, at the weekly conferences, he would get them out, and their possibilities were generally discussed.

Writing humour differs from other writing in this respect: that often the thing you think is the worst is the best, and vice versa. And you cannot rely upon the "strictly original" stories they tell. They are almost invariably old. You must get it out of yourself, with a sort of whoop, and no matter how bad you may think it is, don't be afraid to send it in. But be very particular about a few things; first, as to its not being vulgar or common in style; second, as to how the copy looks. Don't write it until you

can't help writing it, and after you have written it acquire the habit of going over it to make it better. This may be hard at first, but in the long run it is the only way. It is a question of infinite pains. But why not?

EGOTISM

EGOTISM is also known under the names of Vanity and Conceit. But by any other name it is a source of unalloyed happiness to one's self. Solomon, who, after living with seven hundred women who were more or less total strangers to him, who took his money freely and never even offered to sew a button on his pajamas, declared that All was vanity. We are not quarrelling with the result of Solomon's experience, which was almost as extensive as if he were a New York society man, but we are bound to say that we think he was too hard on Vanity. If it hadn't been for Vanity Solomon would not be known to-day. Vanity prompted him to build a temple and acquire a reputation for settling family disputes. It made him what he was, and when his name had become a household word he went back on the best friend he had ever had, showing, as usual, that he was every inch a king. He hounded Vanity so that she has never been the same since that fatal day, although for years both Egotism and Conceit have been trying their best to put her on her feet.

Now, the difference between conceit and egotism

has never been explained, but in reality it is quite simple. Conceit is the unbiased, unprejudiced, pristine satisfaction with which a man contemplates himself. There is nothing personal about conceit. Neither is it critical. A conceited man regards himself as a finished product of nature, something which the Deity, by a lucky accident, happened to get just right—something that couldn't be helped. The conceited man rarely makes any protest against his own perfection. He accepts it. The results happen to be satisfactory to everybody, including himself. The misfortune of others in not having been manufactured so good, so beautiful, so fine as himself, he takes no responsibility for. But then, he is a perfect thing, and nobody ought to complain. He assuredly is not responsible. The egotist, however, goes a trifle deeper. He feels that, along with the Deity, he himself is entitled to some of the glory. The Deity, it is true, furnished the raw material, but he himself has improved upon it. Other men, like the unwise steward, have failed in their trust, but not he. While the Deity has been outside neglecting the office, engaged in other trivial matters, he himself has remained inside attending strictly to business, improving the plant. And what a grand plant it is!

As a promoter of real happiness, the Egotist deserves the Iron Cross, the Victoria Cross, and what other crosses there may be with which to reward

genuine merit. All criticism and advice he puts down. The serenity with which he ignores his own mistakes is equalled by no philosopher. He actually makes a lot of other people believe in and swear by him, simply by his own sincere opinion of himself. He needs no merit. Toil with him is superfluous. He lives by faith alone—faith in the one person in whom he has the utmost confidence—himself.

AN ACTOR ON THEIR HANDS

"THINK of it!" exclaimed Maltby. "My old schoolmate, Mercator Phillby, taking the leading part in a musical comedy and I not knowing it! We must go see it. I must communicate with him. How about Saturday matinée?" He held up the paper.

Mrs. Maltby, although a liberal-minded and adaptable person, was naturally, after the manner of certain sedate wives, not so highly enthusiastic as her husband.

"An actor!" she said. "Oh, dear! I wouldn't renew an old acquaintance like that. You will only regret it. Take my advice and don't do it. Those early friendships never pan out. And with actors!"

"He was a splendid fellow!" said Maltby. "Quiet and sober. I wouldn't have dreamed that he had any talent! It's wonderful! I simply must see him, if only for a word."

"Sober!" sniffed Mrs. Maltby. "Um! Don't you know, my dear, those actors spend all their time, when they are not acting, in carousing. Why, they never last more than a few years. Now don't, *please*, at your time of life, get drawn into that kind of an atmosphere. It's dreadful to think of!"

"Well," replied the diplomatic Maltby, "let's go to the play anyway. I'd rather like to see how Merky looks now. My stars! Notice the way they advertise him!"

Mrs. Maltby, in spite of her outward protestation of austerity, was human. The stage possessed for her a secret fascination. She loved light music. And they went to the play.

Maltby sent his card through the box office after the first act to his old schoolmate. Later on, after the second act, he excitedly showed the answer to his almost frightened but highly curious wife. It read:

> "Bob, old boy! Be sure and wait after the show! I must see you!
>
> MERKY."

After they had gotten home that afternoon, fresh from their adventure in the wings of the theatre, Maltby and his wife sat down and stared at each other across the table.

"You did it," said Mrs. Maltby, severely. "Now don't blame me, no matter what happens."

"But, my dear girl, you must admit he is a nice fellow, and didn't he treat us splendidly? Same old Merky! I simply had to ask him out here for a week-end. Besides, I looked at you first."

"And of course I had to join in and ask him, too,

after you'd gone that far. Now the question is, what on earth shall we do with him?"

There was a tragic silence. But at last the courageous Maltby spoke.

"My dear," he said, "let's be wicked for once. Merky is travelling about the country most of the time, so he can't be with us long enough to get us into bad habits. Let's be sports. We've got to entertain him! Let's resign ourselves for a couple of days to a high old theatrical time. I promise you——"

Mrs. Maltby's face actually turned red.

"I suppose you know what a high old theatrical time means," she whispered. "I've read about those actors, and what they do on Saturdays and Sundays. Don't you remember when we stopped at Long Beach last summer what shameless costumes the actresses wore in bathing? Why, I understand they are very rarely sober. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if your friend drove up to the house Saturday afternoon in a big motor car just full of those dreadful chorus girls. What will the neighbours think?"

Maltby's laugh was slightly hysterical as he replied:

"Now, don't be a hypocrite. I guess Merky can't do us much harm in a couple of days. Besides, be honest! I confess I—I—well, I will rather enjoy having a wild time. Between you and me, the neighbours will envy us."

Mrs. Maltby pretended to be terribly shocked, but she began to be influenced by the same horrible fascination that had come over her husband.

"I suppose we'll have to offer him a cocktail for dinner," she said. "We have some left."

"A cocktail!" cried Maltby. "My dear girl, that will be a drop in the bucket. Now, you might as well do this thing up right and resign yourself. I'll go out at once and buy a bartender's guide so I can mix my own drinks. All actors, you know, mix their own drinks. We must order Scotch and rye and bitters and gin and champagne and liqueurs and two or three kinds of cigarettes. You know these actors smoke cigarettes all the time—and if I can get enough gamblers in the neighbourhood together, we'll have a poker party."

"Where do I come in?" moaned Mrs. Maltby.

"You simple thing, don't you know that in theatrical circles women do just the same as men? You'll be one of us, of course."

"But since it is so hard to get it, wine goes to my head, and I should simply die if I smoked a cigarette. This is a dreadful thing you've gotten us into."

"Nonsense! You can just puff 'em. Don't inhale. You hold it between your fingers like this, and circle it around. And when you drink, eat bread! They say if you will stuff yourself with

bread, you can take any amount of cocktails without feeling them. It acts like a blotter, you know."

Mercator Phillby's play was going on the road, so he had a couple of weeks' rest. Hence he was enabled to accept the Maltby's invitation for the following Saturday.

On that day Maltby, before going to the station to meet him in the auto, took his trembling wife into the dining room.

"Brace up, old girl," he whispered. "Make up your mind to go in for a real devilish time. You may be pretty sick for a couple of days after, but what of that? Let's see—have we got everything? Gin, Scotch, rye, club soda, wine, bitters, cherries, cigarettes, absinthe——"

"Suppose he should bring some of those dreadful chorus girls," moaned Mrs. Maltby. "What would we do? They say actors are fearfully irresponsible. Of course, being rarely sober, they are perhaps not accountable."

She seized a piece of bread from a handy plateful and began to munch it.

"We'll have to put 'em up," retorted Maltby, grimly. "Don't worry. You needn't let me out of your sight. We'll all go down to Hades together. Well, I'm off. Get the cracked ice ready and I'll be back in fifteen minutes."

Mrs. Maltby sat there for what seemed a small

eternity sturdily munching bread. She heard the whistle of the train as through an impenetrable fog. There was a grinding sound outside. The door opened. Voices. She sprang up and almost staggered to the door. Her heart leaped within her as she saw that her husband's schoolmate had come alone and that he was walking upright, able, apparently, to support himself without grabbing the pictures on the walls.

"Here's Merky, old boy!" almost shouted Maltby in an artificial voice. (Merky shook hands cordially with Mrs. Maltby while her husband went on.) "And now, old fellow, what will you have? I know you're simply dying for a drink. So'm I. Got a thirst on me as long as an anaconda!"

He almost dragged his friend into the dining room, Mrs. Maltby meekly following. On the sideboard, hiding the sight of the plate of antidote bread that shrank in the background, was an array of bottles that would have done credit to the old Hoffman House bar in its palmiest days, while on the sewing table, surrounded by a regiment of glasses, was a salad bowl heaped full of cracked ice.

"Now, old boy," said Maltby, his manner almost intoxicated by the mere suggestion of what was coming, "what'll you have? Don't be bashful! Remember, we are all dead game sports. I was foresighted and laid in a big stock against a dry day."

"I've heard about you swift suburbanites," said Merky, smiling, "and I was almost afraid to come out here. But——"

"Ha! Ha!" exclaimed Maltby. "That is a good joke. Shall we start on a Manhattan, Martini, or Bronx? I'll mix one in a jiffy. How about a mint julep or a high-ball? Have a cigarette."

He passed a huge box of those deadly articles to his wife and his guest.

"Name your poison," he said.

Mr. Mercator Phillby raised his hand. He was really a great actor, and his gesture commanded an instant respect.

"My dear friends," he said, "I can't tell you the pleasure it gives me to renew this old tie. But, Bob, we are such old friends that I'm going to be perfectly honest with you. I never touch anything to drink. It would hurt my work if I did. I never did care for smoking. Besides, it's very bad for the throat. In fact, I'm afraid I'm not much of a sport. I can't afford to be, but even if I could, I wouldn't because—well—don't let me stop you. I never like to hold myself up as an example, but really, let me take my bags up to my room, and then if I must take something, give me a glass of milk and lime water, and we'll sit on your lovely piazza and talk over old times. And to-morrow, if you don't mind, we'll have a quiet time. I'd like to hear

a good sermon and take a ride in the afternoon, and——"

When they were alone Mrs. Maltby, tearful and angry, grasped her collapsible husband by his arms. "You—you—you," she whispered hoarsely, "got us into this! Why, I don't believe he would even play golf on Sunday!" She waved toward the mobilized bottles.

"What are we to do with those?" she muttered. "If we don't drink now, he'll think we are not natural. And what will he think of us anyway!"

"I'll be hanged if I care what he thinks!" said Maltby. "He may be an old friend, but he's cheated me out of the time of my life. You actually made me think he might bring one of those chorus girls! It was you who misled me."

Mrs. Maltby buried her face in her hands as two sober, methodical, and virtuous steps were heard coming down the stairs.

"Here I am," she moaned, "so full of bread that I simply cannot eat any dinner!"

BOOK REVIEWERS

FOR so many generations the almost invariably inoffensive book reviewer has been held up to so much scorn that it is high time somebody came to his defense. I once met a book reviewer—by appointment—who had written such vitriolic things about one of my books that I felt something effective should be done about it, but discovered him to be such a gentle and well-meaning creature that instead I came away with a heart full of sympathy for his hapless condition. I am now quite positive that book reviewers as a class are wholly misunderstood. Their nice sense of honour prevents them from associating with authors whose books they review, their relationships being with people of a lower order, such as publishers and editors. Their only knowledge of authors is of necessity derived from the past, concerning itself with those who have gone beyond. And when one reads that Aristophanes was extremely vulgar, that Goethe was undomestic in his habits, that Shakespeare deserted his wife, that Samuel Johnson gorged himself, and that Shelley was excessibly irreligious, it is quite natural that book reviewers should view all authors

with distrust. The simple fact that any man writes a book is indeed quite likely to prejudice the book reviewer against him.

Another complaint against these long-suffering creatures is that they do not read the books they review, and irreverent people are continually making jests about this alleged propensity. The fact is, of course, that this is not necessary. It is not the province of book reviewers to tell what is in a book. If they did this, there would be no use in reading it. It is only necessary to give their opinion, and to form a correct opinion either about a book or a person, it is almost fatal to know too much. We have been reading Shakespeare now for several hundred years, yet no two people agree with him. The first impression of him—that he was silver-tongued, that he was a good playright, and knew his business fairly well—is the prevailing one that now holds, and this in spite of all the study that has been given to him.

In reviewing a book, the reviewer's real concern is to use it as a peg to hang his thoughts on, and not to tell what it is, or what he thinks it is. There are some books, which are mostly the dullest ones, that must be read through, such as histories, philosophies, and almanacs. But novels are occasionally so interesting that one cannot wait to read them through —it would take too much time to get to the end. When a novel is not so much a story as a delineation

of character it is easily possible to get enough out of it in a few pages to make a creditable text. When in addition it is a real story, the trained reviewer rapidly learns by experience what parts to skip. It would be much more useful if a book reviewer in each instance, instead of giving his critique of a book, were to record his exact experience when reading—or attempting to read it. If he told what pages of the book he read and what he skipped, and gave his reasons, this in itself would be informative. The great majority of people who read book reviews undoubtedly believe that they are written as a guide, in order to give some idea of what the book itself really is. This being so, the book reviewer himself ought to be better known. What manner of man is he, and what are his circumstances? Is he married or single? If he is a gentleman recently engaged in matrimony and has an offspring, and if a book on child culture is brought to him for review, will he be fair to it? Doubtless not, as every young parent is very likely to scorn all advice. A woman and her daughter who once did my housework for me when I lived in the Adirondacks insisted upon giving me corned beef and cabbage several times a week. "It doesn't agree with me," I weakly protested, "and is bad for the health."

"Oh, no, sir," replied the woman, "it's fine for the health; Lizzie here was brought up on it, and

look at her." The very most that could have been said for Lizzie was that she was still alive.

That is not the most that can be said for book reviewers, however, as the majority of them are not only very much alive, but extremely conscientious, within their lights. But if at the time of reviewing a book they are suffering from dyspepsia or an income tax report, it is bound to colour their view, whether they realize it or not. For this reason, the condition of the book reviewer at the time of reading should be duly recorded. The matter is much more important than at first it seems to be. Even when a reviewer is using a book only as a text for general observations, the fact that he has been inspired to write about it at all gives it a certain standing with the great public. It is through book reviews that books are introduced and read. Who the book reviewers are and their habits of life, therefore, may determine the general course of our literature. Book reviewers should not only be segregated, but should be kept under constant observation, fed upon simple but nourishing food, and be required to pass an examination, after which they may be duly provided with a book reviewer's license. The laws of book reviewing should be agreed upon and become better known. And reviewers should be graded and licensed according to their standing. In grade A would come those reviewers who are able to read a book a day

without fatigue, and to digest it properly. They should be able to give the essential flavour of the book without telling so much about it that the reader will feel that it is not necessary to read it. They should also have themselves under such good control as to restrain themselves from writing anything clever about the book, merely for the sake of being clever, and without regard to the damage done to the author and publisher. Indeed, I should be inclined to make it a law that hereafter there shall be no more clever book reviewers, although I am bound to say that clever ones are few and far between, when we consider the whole mass.

I should also make a distinction between the city and country book reviewer, with the odds greatly favouring the latter. City book reviewers have too many other things to do. The country editor is the ideal book reviewer; not that he has little to do, but what he has he does more thoroughly. I am inclined to believe that all the books published should be turned over to country editors, who might be duly subsidized by the Government. The total volume of book reviews thus turned out would be well worth while.

But if it be decreed otherwise, then all the big bow-wow book reviewers, who are obliged by necessity to read one or even two books a day to keep up with the procession, should certainly be provided

with helpers, who could first be apprenticed to their masters for a term of years, before being provided with a license.

In the second grade of book reviewers I would place all those reviewers who declare themselves to be critics. And assuming that their other qualifications were sufficient, I would make it an inducement for them to work up into the first grade their willingness at any time to abandon the idea that they are critics, but only human beings with ordinary feelings and opinions. Well, why not?

PALS

"HOW does it happen that people are always talking about love?" she said.

"How can they help it," I replied, "with you around? You naturally suggest the idea. I am beginning to feel that way myself."

"And going back on your word!"

The arrangement between us had been a simple but rather unusual one. She was a very pretty girl. She was a very popular girl. Two weeks before, when I had met her first, we had chanced to have a serious conversation. She did not understand why it was that two people—of opposite sex—could not be friendly with each other without danger. I had gently tried to explain it to her, but she still disagreed with me. It developed during the course of the conversation that we were both going to the same place. And she had extracted a solemn agreement from me that during my stay I would treat her just as if she were a good fellow.

"You forget," I replied, "that you referred to the subject first. Evidently something brought it up in your mind."

As I spoke she raised her head, and looking off in

the distance I saw a tall young fellow with a bag of golf clubs.

"And so *that's* it," I ventured.

She did not blush. Instead she looked at me calmly.

"Yes, that's it," she said. "You see, I made the same agreement with him that I did with you."

"And he went back on it? No! I'll bet you mentioned the matter first to him, just as you did to me."

"I have no recollection of it," she said, with what I thought was a touch of embarrassment.

The truth was that there were four of us, and that she had made the agreement with each one, as distinct from the rest; and it chanced that we had all found it out.

So a week had passed by, in which four young men, with only one remarkably pretty girl among them, had allowed no word of love to pass their lips. I suspected, as I looked at her, that she was the guilty party. I suspected that she was getting a trifle tired of that agreement. And why not? Hadn't she been living on admiration? She thought she didn't like it. But it was the breath of life to her.

The next evening we four fellows compared notes. We met every evening to do this and to renew our vow that we would hold out.

Panton was the first to speak.

"I have news," he said, "stirring news. She started the subject herself. She said she couldn't understand why people were always wanting to talk about love."

"Here, too!" I exclaimed.

"Same here!" cried Trayne.

"Right here!" said Brumway. Then he spoke solemnly.

"Look here, boys," he said, "I don't see what we are really gaining by this ridiculous agreement. We are, in my opinion, losing a lot of valuable time. Here's a very pretty girl whose society might be used to good advantage by someone. There's a lot of energy going to waste. Of course we can't all have her; but why not one of us? The rest certainly won't be any worse off than they are now."

"Evidently," said I, "you have no idea of the principle we are trying to establish; you assume that happiness in this world is the only thing worth striving for. My dear boy, you are no superman! Remember, there is a high moral lesson somewhere."

"Well," exclaimed Trayne, "just what is it? We might as well have the thing defined again, to help our resolution."

"Perfectly simple," replied Panton. "Here's a pretty girl who has always been used to being admired. She's more or less dependent upon it. She

has the idea that all young men think about is making love. Now we—representing the sex as we do—are going to convince her to the contrary—we *are* convincing her to the contrary. Have you no pride of sex? Of course it's worth while."

"Certainly it's worth while!" I shouted. "We must keep it up! No traitors in this camp!"

At this moment the bell-boy came in. He held in his hand a tray and a letter. The tray contained four packages. The letter was addressed to "The Quartette."

I turned pale. But what was the use?

"Open it and read it," whispered Brumway, hoarsely. After all, he was the only honest man among us.

The letter read as follows:

GENTLEMEN:

I return herewith the four engagement rings—one from each of you—which you were good enough to bestow upon me yesterday in proof of the fact that no man ever goes back on his word.

Thanking you for your kind intentions, and begging leave to inform you that I am engaged already to a nice young man from the city, who will be here on the next train, I remain

MABEL——.

A LETTER OF PROTEST

To the Powers That Be,
Sunrise Avenue, Corner of Milky Way.

GENTLEMEN: We are in receipt of a six-and-one-half-pound infant forwarded to us from your establishment, and beg to report that same has arrived in good condition. We regret to state, however, that he came without any baggage, and in such a helpless condition that we shall be compelled to furnish him with board and lodging and necessary covering for a number of years to come.

He appears to have a very uneven disposition and has acquired the unfortunate habit of attracting to our home certain relatives who, before his arrival, made our life exceedingly pleasant by their absence.

He cries for food continually, and as food, at the present time, is very high, we can look ahead and see that he is going to be a source of continuous expense to us. His one merit appears to be that he is not able to talk. He manages, however, to counteract this by other sounds which are not wholly agreeable, especially from one to three o'clock in the morning, when we have arrived home from some

pleasant evening gathering and need the necessary rest in order to recuperate our energies for the following day.

He insists on having his meals brought to him at all hours of the day and night by an outwardly pleasant but inwardly officious person who has practically taken charge of the whole household.

At present this consignment has developed no powers of locomotion, and has to be taken out in the fresh air every day, covered with expensive rugs imported from distant countries.

When he first came, he was somewhat a novelty of conversation among the female members of the household, and afforded them an opportunity to stop talking about their games of golf, their church work, and other subjects upon which they have been dilating for several years. We regret to say, however, that the novelty has now worn off.

His looks and general appearance are a matter of continual dispute, particularly among the male members, who are almost unanimous in agreeing that he is not prepossessing. He is declared to bear a startling resemblance to certain of these male members, who, being of strong courage, bear the news with resignation and with a show of outward complacency.

While we feel a certain obligation to keep him on hand, in view of all the circumstances, we are telling you frankly our opinion in the hope that when you

forward another consignment you will bear these facts in mind, and see if you cannot do better by us next time.

It is, of course, always possible that we may be happily disappointed, and that this particular consignment may turn out better in the future than the present indications would warrant, but our personal observation and experience, extending over quite a long period, are not provocative of much hope in this direction.

Yours very truly,

THE FAMILY.

THE GREAT BINGTOP MYSTERY

THRILLING DETECTIVE STORY, IN WHICH OUR MODERN METHODS ARE REVEALED

MR. BUNCUM POTTS, the world-famous detective, sat in his office one morning at nine o'clock, nonchalantly, as was his habit, tapping his pencil on his pink blotter, when the bell rang, and there was ushered in a short, stout man, very much out of breath.

"I have a very remarkable case to report to you," said the short, stout man. "Last night I was robbed."

Mr. Buncum Potts reached for a card.

"Wait a moment," he said, calmly. "Be kind enough to answer my questions in the regular order. Do not volunteer information. It upsets our system. Name?"

"Mr. Abercrombie Bingtop."

"Address?"

"No. 40, Spring Road."

"Are you a married man?"

"Yes, sir."

"Live with your wife?"

"Yes, sir."

"Any other occupants of the house?"

"One servant."

"No children?"

"No, sir."

Mr. Buncum Potts touched a tiny bell, and handed a memorandum he had made to a bright-looking young man who entered, and who took it without a word and disappeared.

"Now, sir," said Mr. Buncum Potts, "you may tell the story of the robbery, making it as brief as possible."

"Last night I came home about twelve o'clock, went upstairs to my room, where I carefully removed my clothes and tumbled——"

"Excuse me; you said *tumbled;* that is what you mean, I take it?"

'Yes, sir; tumbled into bed. Before doing so I had carefully placed my trousers, which contained, among other things, a hundred dollar bill, over the top of a chair."

"You are positive the hundred dollar bill was in your trousers?"

"Positive. I took it out and looked at it, to make sure of it, and then, placing it in my pocketbook, in the back pocket, I put the trousers over the chair and, as I said, tumbled into bed. I slept very soundly. This morning at seven o'clock I awoke,

and, reaching over for the trousers, discovered that the hundred dollar bill was gone."

"Did you examine all the fastenings of the house?"

"Yes, sir; everything was secure; nobody had entered during the night."

"How many people were in the house at the time the robbery took place?"

"Two—my wife and the cook."

"Where do these two people sleep?"

"The cook sleeps upstairs on the top floor. My wife sleeps in the next room."

"Is there a door between your room and your wife's?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you notice, when you removed your trousers, whether this door was open or not?"

"It was open, but I shut it."

"Softly?"

"Very softly."

"And this morning, when you discovered your loss, was this door open?"

"Open."

"Ah! Have you ever been robbed before, Mr. Bingtop?"

"Occasionally I have missed small amounts. But I have never carried a hundred dollar bill about with me before."

"Pardon me, Mr. Bingtop, if I ask you a rather

personal question. This, of course, is strictly confidential, and I assure you I should not ask it unless it was absolutely necessary. Have you any reason to suspect that your wife is not strictly honest?"

"Well, I have sometimes thought——"

"That will do, Mr. Bingtop. I have no desire to pursue a painful subject further than our system requires. I shall have a report——"

Mr. Buncum Potts consulted his watch.

"—in fifty minutes. Meanwhile, have a cigar, and here's the morning paper."

Turning to his desk, the great detective became speedily engrossed in some of his knotty problems. Mr. Bingtop, confident in his powers, serenely read the paper.

In exactly fifty minutes there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Mr. Buncum Potts.

The bright-looking young man entered. He was followed by a tall, thin, rather handsome woman, who wore a new hat. Mr. Potts arose and bowed.

"Mrs. Bingtop?"

"Yes, sir." The bright young man had made an almost imperceptible sign to his employer, who turned to Mr. Bingtop.

"This lady has confessed that she committed the crime. She was arrested in one of our largest milliner's establishments."

Mrs. Bingtop turned to Mr. Buncum Potts. Her eyes were filled with tears.

"How can I thank you enough," she said, "for what you have done for my husband? Without your help he would have worried himself sick over this mystery. Besides, I have spent all the money."

"Don't mention it," replied the great detective, modestly.

As for Mr. Bingtop, he was too much overcome to express himself. All he could do after paying his bill, which amounted to one hundred dollars, was to keep repeating to his wife, as he escorted her downstairs:

"Marvellous man! Marvellous man!"

GOLF AND LITERATURE

ONE of England's most distinguished orators used to declare that he always made it a point to read an essay by Matthew Arnold before making a speech. The reading of Macaulay has been the mainstay of some writers, the creative mood being thereby invoked.

Psychology has proved beyond reasonable doubt this power of suggestion. It remains only to combine golf with literature to produce that perfect union of the physical and mental by which the highest human harmony may be attained. Golf pursued by itself becomes a passion which at last leaves its victim quite hopeless from any companionable standpoint. He looks at the world with eyes made of golf balls. His intellect is gradually narrowed down to the circumference of a tee. Whatever sense of nature or beauty he may have had in the beginning becomes atrophied. Having eyes, he sees naught but a rim around a hole. He is impossible.

Exclusive immersion in literature produces results quite different from this, but not less harrowing. The poor victim, led away by serried words and seductive phrases, comes in time to the belief that he is

intelligent. Like a horse on an exclusive oat diet, he feels his superiority.

"There is more ado to interpret interpretations than to interpret things," says Montaigne, and thus the victim of literature leads a life of illusion. The scholar's lack of common sense is proverbial. The golfer's narrowness of intellect is painful.

Golf, however, though it be narrow, is real life, a fractional grasp of concrete facts. Literature at best is a show of shadows. They offset each other perfectly. Golf furnishes you with the physical basis for good mental digestion. Literature consoles you for golf.

The writer hath indubitable proof that the persistent reading of "Paradise Lost" will lengthen one's drive from twenty-five to thirty yards. The majesty of Milton's rhythm has its sublime effect. Unconsciously you get the free swing.

If you are off in your game, try an essay of Lamb's beforehand. You will discover, to your surprise, that there may be a humorous pleasure in topping a ball.

The book of Job and the Lamentations of Jeremiah will both be found splendid neutralizers by some players. When you play golf so badly that your friends look off in the distance and smile faintly as you bring up the subject, and when the number of balls you lose makes you an object of pathetic

popularity with the caddies—who steal over the ground afterward and gather the missing up at their leisure—then Job's ash-heap reveals itself in its true light. When, for example, you have been slicing and topping your ball all day, when you have dug up the earth, when your principal specialty along the whole course has been to get into bunker after bunker and every sandpit there is, is it not real consolation to go back hundreds of years and read in the words of a great authority, none other than Bildad, the Shuhite?:

> For he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare. . . . The snare is laid for him in the ground and a trap for him in the way. . . . His confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle.

AN AFTERNOON AT THE CURRENT EVENTS CLUB

AND THE LADIES SAY: "WELL, WHY NOT?"

THE Current Events Club is a modern institution that exists for the purpose of injecting the news of the day into the minds of a large body of ladies assembled for that purpose. No man is allowed to be present during these esoteric proceedings. The only chance he would have getting in would be to disguise himself as a lady. This is highly expensive. It would involve an investment so large as not to be dwelt upon without a convulsive shudder. He would have to be underwritten by a pool of plutocrats. He would have to wear a hat with ostrich plumes and a blue velvet chassis. He would have to adorn his extremities with female shoes, and hide his embarrassment in a three-piece suit so perishable that no Trust Company would dare to place a mortgage upon it. His fur piece and diamond cluster alone would make strong financiers weep, and there would also be interior decorations that would make even the bank roll of a master mechanic look like thirty centimes. It is possible, however, by com-

paring the testimony of a number of witnesses, and finding out where they disagree, to get a fair idea of what goes on.

"I was so charmed about the Balkans," said a large pink lady with a sealskin body, afterward. "Of course, I knew there were Balkans, but I had no idea they were so absorbing. Think of their bringing on the war! Oh, yes, they did! She wouldn't have said so if she hadn't known—she's perfectly reliable. And do you know, my dear, she has actually been there. She was too modest to mention it in the lecture, of course, but it's all in the printed announcement. You must read it through—so illuminating. I devoured it, until I was interrupted by my hairdresser—yes, she's really fine—keeps my Marcel perfect—and wasn't it wonderful what she said about Gladstone? He was a great English statesman, you know, and such a delightfully rugged man—so sincere and moral. He was frightfully anxious about them years ago—I mean about the Balkans—quite before I was born. I had no idea he had so much feeling—and for an Englishman, too. But I just adore Englishmen, don't you? even if they are awfully distant at times—although I do think the Prince is an exception—perfectly charming boy. Have you met him? Oh, you should have. I quite enjoyed having an informal chat with him. Such simple manners! I said to him, 'Think of your being King some day!'

It really embarrassed him, you know—I mean the thought of it. Such a dear, modest boy!"

She made many more profound historical observations, but I must tear myself away from her at present, and give my impression of the affair itself.

Current Events Clubs exist in many places, but only in the Metropolis do they reach that intellectual perfection so necessary to maintain our modern standards of culture.

The Club meets on certain afternoons in the parlour of a Gotham hotel, in other parts of which the food, carefully guarded by very plain clothes men, is dealt out at intervals to moneyed strangers who have come to New York to be relieved of their valuables and moral natures. The Club is presided over by an educated lady who began her career in a correspondence school of short-story writing, but abandoned it to take up this larger intellectual irresponsibility.

She prepared herself for her duties by reading through one whole volume of the Congressional Record, and the fact that she survived commands the respect of all who know her. Even now, however, she cannot refer to this tragic period of her life without tears. She has also travelled abroad with either a Mr. or a Dr. Cook, and has passed a winter in Washington, where she personally met a senator, a secretary of state, and a Chinese ambassador. She

is therefore educated in the loftiest and most Chesterfieldian sense.

As she appears on the improvised platform, carrying a sweet smile and a bamboo wand to point out the world spots on the maps behind, there is a homogeneous flutter of ostriches and aigrettes and a subdued murmur of applause, accompanied by a general adjustment of furs and lorgnettes. Then the metaphorical ball is passed to the field, the players take their places in the boxes, and the world series begins.

Her programme is varied and complete. It starts with an account of the leading world events "since we last met" and occasions many sighs of relief to think that nothing has happened to prevent her coming: for if she had caught cold or been run over on the Avenue, these ladies assembled before her might have been left in total darkness all the rest of their lives. They would still go on being alive, would have gone on shopping expeditions and to afternoon teas and bridge parties and box luncheons, but their knowledge of what is going on in the world would have stopped short at the end of the last meeting—on the day the miners walked out, or when Senator Bounder put on a red cravat to address the country on the momentous issues of the day.

They would still have gone on glancing over the paper left on the breakfast table by a careless hus-

band, but who would be there to disentangle the Balkans, or to tell on just what spot on the map Señor Vicente Blasco Ibañez was egging on his Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse?

She begins with a story that is tied up with lavender ribbons and trimmed with lace, like a box of candy, and everybody is put in good humour. World events must always be served up in this manner, otherwise some of the ladies might faint with indignation or horror, and have to be carried off in an ambulance at great expense.

It appears that several things have happened since the last meeting. Mr. Gompers hasn't been feeling well. Mr. Lloyd George has made another statement. Wall Street has been completely upset [one lady sniffs a bottle and whispers, "My husband lost thirty thousand. Fancy!"]. Then there has been a lamentable shortage of sugar, but this will be relieved [a general relaxing]. There have been a couple of industrial conferences at which several prominent people spoke, and Massachusetts has gone American. The League, of which mention was made at the last meeting, is still bearing up and able to take slight nourishment. Of course, one must be fair to the senators. They are really nice men. And one must be fair to the miners. They are also fairly nice men, although soiled in places. An Italian professor has attacked Newton's theory of gravita-

tion ["I had forgotten that he invented it," whispers one lady. "But now I recall reading about it in school"]. Paris, poor dear, is shivering with cold. Ohio has put on rubbers (or should it be overshoes?). Enver Pasha has been having a dreadful time with the Trans-Caspians.

Several Bolsheviks have been discovered hiding in the immediate vicinity. Ireland is still trying to annex the British Empire, including Lord Northcliffe, with the help of Bernard Shaw. H. G. Wells has written a history of the world, first run in serial form as a thriller, and afterward stepped on by Charlie Chaplin. Arnold Bennett is unnaturally quiet, and Booth Tarkington hasn't written a play for three weeks.

An example of the latest and worst free verse is then recited as a grand finale, and the ladies pull themselves together, resume their talk where it was cut off by the lecturer, and gradually disperse to late-afternoon functions, while the lecturer herself goes to her masseur, and the world crisis wraps the bedraggled drapery of its couch about it and lies down to unpleasant dreams, until the next meeting is called.

Afterward the affair is discussed by a short horn-glass brunette, in a four-hundred-dollar sport suit and a silver fox fur tippet, and a tall, pearl-studded blonde with Russian sable fenders.

"I suppose it's awful of me, but I can't help feeling sorry for those poor miners. Of course, one must be fair, but I'm sure it is dreadfully unpleasant and smelly to work in a mine. She said——"

"Now, Dorothy, you simply must not lose your perspective. I think our statesmen have been wonderful all through. Such poise! We certainly must have coal, you know. Just think of all the people who can't afford to go to Palm Beach."

As for the pink lady with the sealskin body, she goes home to her husband, whom she sees occasionally (this being between seasons), bursting with news.

"My dear," she says, "I know everything that's going on, and our conversation might be so interesting if you would only talk."

He passes his hand wearily across his corrugated brow.

"About what?"

"Why, about the absorbing events that are happening. Do you fully realize that we are now confronted by a world crisis?"

He gazes at her wildly, while the butler passes the salted almonds.

"Good heavens!" he mutters, "don't bring that up. I'm trying to forget about it."

THE MAN WHO CAME BACK

HENRY BILKINS, when he returned, had been dead exactly ten years. Under the new order, he was the first man to return. We don't know how many others came back later. The facts about one individual are all that should be crowded into a story like this.

In the same suit he had worn at his funeral ten years before—slightly mustier from having, during this period, reposed in the family vault—Henry Bilkins stood on the corner of F Street and Sunset Avenue. This was where his funeral had passed.

It was an ornate and magnificent funeral, as those functions go, but it had been sincere and widespread with a genuine grief that had slipped its dam and overflowed into the surrounding country. For Henry Bilkins was a man beloved. He had worked hard, he had raised a family, he had left a fortune and a successful business, and cut off as he had been, just beyond his prime, those who had become dependent upon his advice, his judgment, his way of shouldering their responsibilities, those who loved

him for his kindliness, his sympathies, his companionship—all these were prostrated by the shock of his sudden departure.

That was why Henry Bilkins came back, when, under the new method, first discovered by the distinguished president of a Society of Psychical Research he found that he could come back. It was a sense of duty to others. There was no reason to suppose that he wasn't having a good time where he was—for he had been a model man—but, knowing how he had been missed, how badly they all felt about it, how dependent they were upon him, and all that, Henry Bilkins felt that he must go where duty called. So here he was.

He walked down the street to his office of the old sign, that had now been changed to a new one, with his son's name. He entered the lower door. He walked up the stairs. He entered the office. There had been changes, but he caught the word "Private," and entered that door before he could be stopped. He faced his eldest son.

"Arthur!"

"Father!"

There was for a moment considerable excitement. Not the sort which females invariably exhibit, but a real man-to-man excitement, brought out by such an unprecedented shock. Then they sat down calmly and talked it over.

"I haven't a cent," said Henry Bilkins. "We never used it where I was."

Arthur was now married, and the business—well, business wasn't quite so good as it had been, and there were certain babies—still, his was a generous, a filial nature.

"Of course," he replied, opening the cash drawer. "Here, father, is a hundred dollars. That will last you until——"

Henry Bilkins took the bills and folded them up carefully. Certain things were beginning to reveal themselves.

"I left you most of my money, Arthur."

Then, the truth coming to him, he got up smiling and said:

"Don't let me disturb you, my boy. I'm going around now to renew some of the old ties. By the way, how's your mother?"

Arthur's face changed.

"Mother's all right, sir," he said, with something of the old-time deference. "Perhaps you'd better not see her until—well, I'll go with you. We'll make an appointment. I want to think it over."

Henry Bilkins began the rounds of his old friends. First he called on Gadsby. Gadsby and he had played golf once a week for the last five years of Bilkins' life. There were the usual startling preliminaries.

"I'd dearly love to play with you this afternoon," said Gadsby, "but—well, I have an engagement with Perkins. To-morrow? One with Hopkins. Perhaps some day next week."

Bilkins left Gadsby and called on Whittler and Dimpleton, and the president of his old bank, who was still alive, and he even went so far as to hire an auto and make a journey to the suburbs to visit his old secretary, who had married the assistant bookkeeper the year after his death, and had now a little brood of her own.

At five o'clock in the afternoon he went back to his son's office. Arthur was waiting for him—looking slightly paler and more anxious even than in the morning. They sat down silently.

"Arthur," said Henry Bilkins, at last, "I have made a singular discovery. Nobody wants me back. My old friends have all forgotten me, and while they expressed a certain degree of pleasure in seeing me, it was mostly perfunctory. I couldn't take up the threads again. I left you my money. It would be awkward, even if it were practicable, to give it back to me. The ties by which I was united to you were broken, and have all healed or been united to other interests. Now, Arthur, I'm going back—nay, don't protest. We might as well be honest. Besides, it's perfectly natural that I should be forgotten.

Yes, Arthur, I'm going to return. But there's just one thing, Arthur, before I go—just one thing. I know, of course, your mother's married. I saw it in your face. But I'd like to see her—to press her hand —to say good-day to her, just for old time's sake. Can you arrange this for me, my boy—over the phone?"

Henry Bilkins' voice actually shook. His son got up.

"Father," he said, "I, too, have been thinking this over. You are right. It isn't because I'm hard-hearted—but this is a practical world. And so, father, I'm ready to agree with you. Yes, you'd better go back. But it wouldn't be advisable for you to see mother."

"Why not? Isn't she happily married?"

"Oh, yes. But, you see, father, mother has married a man—well, he's a nice man, but he needs regulating. And the only way she can succeed in regulating him is to hold you up to him as a model. She keeps your picture on the wall as a constant example. We all help her more or less. Your memory, your virtues, keep him toeing the mark. He has to live up to you. Now, father, you see what would happen if——"

Henry Bilkins got up. He held out his hand.

"I understand," he muttered, "those new cars that pass here go to the cemetery, don't they? Well,

good-bye, Arthur, I'm glad to have seen you even for this short time. I'm going back, don't worry." He was gone.

The door closed behind him. There was a moment's pause.

Then Arthur got up and opened it.

"Father," he called.

The old gentleman turned on the landing.

"Excuse me, father," said Arthur, "but you might let me have what's left of that hundred—if you don't mind, father."

INCOGNITO

THEY came into the room quietly—Modesty and Art—and sat down patiently together. You would scarcely have known they were there. Somehow they never make any noise, those two. And the great man was writing.

By and by the great man chanced to look up from his typewriter and saw them both sitting there. And he was quite naturally surprised. Wouldn't you be surprised if you were a great man and Modesty and Art should come into your room—and you didn't know who they were?

But the great man was cautious. He was accustomed to homage. These strangers might have come to pay that. So he thought it was best to take it for granted that there was the best of reasons why they should be there. Besides, they looked rather pleasant and inoffensive. There was nothing about them to alarm anybody.

"Good afternoon," said the great man, politely. On the table there were some sketches he had drawn for the great book he was writing, a masterpiece of literature, a book that teemed with human interest, "What can I do for you?" said the great man.

His visitors were sitting rather close together, their hands clasped. Art spoke.

"This is America, is it not, great sir?" asked Art.

"Yes."

"You must pardon me for asking," said Art, "but we are comparative strangers to this land. We came originally from Greece, but we lived, you know, in Italy and France until—until the war drove us out. We had to go somewhere, and so we came here."

At this Modesty spoke, very quietly, very demurely, her wan cheeks flushing.

"Yes, sir," she continued, "we belong to each other, he and I, and we never have been parted; but here, sir, the crowds confuse us, and the atmosphere is unclear, and, of course, we shall go back some day; but meanwhile, could you let us possibly stay with you? We'll promise not to interrupt you or cause you any thought if we may but have a bite to eat and some straw upon which to sleep. They told us at the corner that you were among the greatest of these people, and so we——"

The great American author—for by this time the indulgent and discerning reader will no doubt have recognized him—arose with a kindly smile and motioned the two strangers to the door. He pointed into the distance.

"My friends," he said, "your story interests me greatly, and if I were not so busy I should love to

become better acquainted with you both. But my house is full and the demands upon me are exacting. Do you see that large sign down there? Well, that is the headquarters of the Foreign Relief Committee. You go there and they will take care of you and see that you both get back safe and sound. Just tell them my name and it will be all right. Don't mention it. Good afternoon."

Then he went back to his typewriter, his brow furrowed with care, and, looking up at the clock as he prepared to strike the first key, he said:

"These interruptions! At least fifty dollars' worth of time wasted!"

MANNERS

NO NATIONAL commission has yet been appointed to regulate manners. Yet, how we are to act and what we are to do are never absent from our calculations.

Nothing is so important to us as our appearance before others. No man would dare to admit to himself that he is not a gentleman; no woman, that she is not a lady. This ruling idea, older than man (for vanity is discernible in animals) is the basis of our extravagance. In a land where commercial success is supreme above all other successes, there may be a kind of distinction in a man's being crooked, provided, as the slangists put it, he has "got away with it."

But such a man who, according to simple Christian principles, must sizzle in hell when he dies and is quite indifferent to such a fate, would burn up with mortification if caught in some obvious social *faux pas*. What we are all trying hardest to do is to make it appear that we are to the manner born. Therefore we are ready to spend money which ought to be conserved, or, indeed, to make any sacrifice to keep up appearances. The memory of a snub is more enduring than debt, more rankling than ingratitude. Much as we abhor the vices and vulgarity of Sir

Pitt Crawley, his picture is unconsciously softened in our eyes by the unalterable fact that he was a noble man; indeed, if it were not for that fact Thackeray's high art would have had no excuse in painting him.

Our ambitions lie all in one direction—to be the equal and superior to our neighbour in social matters; to live in a better house; to drive in a more luxurious equipage; to set above him the standard of manners. Where there is to-day so much "efficiency," is it not singular that no expert has risen who is prepared in a course, say, of ten lessons, to equip us with that indefinable something which will enable us to acquire in our particular community the reputation for being "the real thing?"

The truth is, that nobody can teach this sort of thing. It is not to be learned. What, for example, is the particular demerit in a man wearing suspenders when he plays golf? There is no harm in a simple pair of suspenders. Indeed, they serve in many cases an admirable and necessary purpose. The man who plays golf in them may be of good moral character; he may be kind to his wife, and on good terms with his God; yet, when everything has been said in his favour, his utter hopelessness is only the more evident.

Such a man is beyond the pale of human endeavour. Nothing can be done for him. His social redeemer has not yet come to earth.

HIS WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY

SHE knew that he was coming. It had all been arranged beforehand over the telephone. Yet, as he rang the bell of her suburban villa, he was conscious that he was embarrassed and flustered. One does not acquire the habit of proposing every day to pretty girls.

He was ushered from the bright light of day into a semi-toned room full of people. She advanced cordially and waved her hand about, introducing him.

"This," she said, with a trace of self-consciousness, "is the gentleman who is going to propose to me. Be seated, everybody, and the ceremony will proceed."

"But I can't——"

"Now, my dear, it's all right. It seems embarrassing, but really, if you stop to think, it is all for the best. You see, this is our little club which meets during the season once every two weeks, of which I am the humble president. You needn't be awfully sentimental, you know. Just be yourself—only it must last an hour. Come, now, you won't spoil it all, will you? Be nice about it. Remember my reputation is at stake. Every other suburb for miles around copies us."

He faced her, paralyzed with surprise. The audience began to applaud.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded.

"Go on," she replied. "That's splendid. A little quarrel first will be an immense help and will lead up to the real business."

He sternly took her hand. More applause.

"Come," he said, "this has gone far enough! What do you mean?"

"Well, you came around to propose, didn't you? You told me so over the 'phone. You won't deny that."

"Yes, I did," he stammered.

"Then I thought I would avail myself of this splendid opportunity. You see, my dear, it's this way. Now that I've been elected president, I've simply got to get up an entertainment that will interest people. We've danced until we are sated with it. We've played bridge until we're bored to death. We've had afternoon teas and church fairs and authors' readings and musicals and recitations until we are all worn out, and so, dear, when you told me you were coming around to propose, I said: 'Here's my chance for something new.' Go on, don't stop! You're going to make a hit. You've got 'em all going! The doors are all locked! You can't get away! Win me in three quarters of an hour, and I'm positive that when my head drops on your shoulder you'll get a rising vote of thanks!"

A STAND-OFF

THE Visible and the Invisible met. "We ought to come to some arrangement," said the Visible, "as to just who and what we are, and what we are both doing. The philosophers have been exercising their combined stupidity over us long enough."

"What do they say about us?" asked the Invisible.

"To be honest, I don't quite know. Many of them praise you to the skies—say that you are the only real thing—while at the same time they declare that I am of no consequence."

"Well, consider the source," said the Invisible. "I wouldn't allow a little thing like that to disturb me."

"Well, then, what do you think of me?" asked the Visible.

"How can I help but think well of you when I created you?"

"That's news!"

This made the Invisible smile an inscrutable smile.

"Certainly. You know it's a wise child that knows its own parent. I made you what you are."

"How?"

"Quite easily," replied the Invisible. "If your

parents were alive and could be seen, you would know them, wouldn't you?"

"Why, yes. But I always supposed that I was an orphan."

"Nonsense! Well, then, if your parents are not, and never have been, visible, they must have been invisible. That's exactly where I come in. If it were not for me you wouldn't be here."

"Well, there's something in that!"

"There's a lot in it, I assure you. But the trouble with you has been that you are spoiled. You think that just because you are visible you are at liberty to do as you please."

"What would you advise?"

"Be humble. Always bear in mind that I made you. Without me you couldn't exist, and it is too late to change anything."

WHEN THE CITIES GO TO THE COUNTRY

OUR cities need exercise. About the only outdoor sport they indulge in is watching the waiters in the roof gardens. The crop of wheat, corn, oats, and alfalfa grown in city roof gardens as yet has had no appreciable effect upon the world's supply—with the possible exception of alfalfa; but as this is grown in the shape of whiskers, the total amount of calories, or nourishment, is negligible.

No, we must do something else. No city can afford to belong to more than one golf club; and at golf clubs you sow golf balls, but you rarely reap any. You can go out and lose all the golf balls you want to in a day, but when it comes to finding any, the best you can do is along about dusk to run across a battered, black, misshapen affair that looks as if it had been present at Verdun.

No, brothers, there is nothing in that. Cities need farm life; and God knows that the farm needs cities.

That is to say, the farms need the cities right out there.

I once lived on a farm and I know all about the crying need for some city to sit down near, where it can be talked to and hobnobbed with. On that

farm I was always thirsty, and I always had to be drawing water. You know what happens when you just get started playing bridge with a lot of women in the little gold reception room at the club just off the main hall in the rear—the last room, where the attendants never penetrate. And just as you get started, all the women get thirsty at once. You spend the rest of the evening carting water to them and listening to what they say between hands. Well, that was the way it was at that farm. I was thirsty and all the women were thirsty, and the farm hands (who had to be catered to) were thirsty, and I spent all of my time wandering back and forth from the only well there was. Rebecca was a poor thing compared to me. And so I say that I don't blame any man for working on a farm and wishing he had a city somewhere on the premises, so he could sit down and get a drink—even if it was only a lemon seltzer—occasionally.

We must do something about it, because if we don't, there won't be anything left to eat. The farmers are all leaving the farms and going to the cities. No crops. No vegetables. Nothing but society. It won't do. It's got to stop. Some city must come forward and volunteer.

This idea, however, did not originate with me, but it came as the result of a conversation I overheard at a prominent New York hotel between two chappies.

It shows that you never can tell where you may get an idea from anyway.

"It's really quite sad, old boy," said one, "this agricultural situation of ours—quite desperate, I believe."

"Rawther," said the other. "I fancy you refer to the shortage of food. I feel strongly, strongly, old dear, that we ought to do something about it. I wouldn't mind working a couple of hours in the fields myself—if one could get the proper togs together for that sort of thing. Wretched garments those farmers wear as a rule."

"Still," said the other, lighting a cigarette, "it's exercise that counts, after all. Golf is all very well, but there's no particular object in it, you know—it really doesn't get one anywhere. Now if I could turn out a couple of bushels of alfalfa or grapefruit or artichokes or shredded wheat or whatever it is they grow in those foreign states of ours, I should feel much better about it than if I played a round of mere golf."

"Ha!" exclaimed the other bright one, ever ready to take his little joke, "mere golf is good! That's what you are, deah boy—a mere golfer—Ha! But of course we couldn't run out to Kansas or Missouri or whatever those places are, unless we had a decent place to sleep. It's all very well exercising during the day—no one minds that in moderation—but

one must throw oneself, you know, on a decent bed. I'm told they have no box springs west of—dear me, I think it's Indianapolis. Fancy having to sleep on something that wasn't a box spring! If we could only take New York with us, what a ripping adventure!"

And so there you are. There's the idea. And it is easier than you think. It can be done. Greater feats in mechanical engineering are being accomplished constantly. New York is the one to do it, above all others. New York is the great consumer. New York must be taken down, and reassembled where it will do the most good.

The facts—as I have indicated, I trust not too peevishly, for even in the fact of a great crisis we must be calm—are simple. Economists are thundering them. Politicians and reformers are declaring them. Pompous industrial experts are explaining them; and in spite of what these gentlemen say, we still believe them true. In the language of editorial writers and a high official who wishes me to withhold his name, a crisis confronts us. And this is no common crisis, even if it is a garden one. Yes, gentlemen and friends of mine, unless the city can go to the country we shall all starve. We cannot discriminate. If we could, then we wouldn't need to do a single thing. If we could arrange it so that the people we want to starve would starve, we wouldn't care if the

cities never did anything about it. But the chances are—if we can judge from history—that all the people who ought to starve will not. And all the grand folks like you and me, upon whom the whole country is depending for its character and moral uplift and intellectual material and rich humour and good breeding, will all lack enough to eat. That's why we must do something, now. Unless the men who have been steadily going from the country to the city can be made to turn back and go to the country, what is going to happen to us? We will run out of things to eat just about the same week that the stuff we have stored up in our lockers gives out. Maybe Providence has made special arrangements to have this happen, on the principle that if there is nothing left in one's locker, food is of no consequence. But, on the other hand, we have faith to believe—somehow or other—that that stuff in the lockers is going to be renewed. Say this in whispers, please.

And the great fact is that the sons of men, and of women also, now that they can vote, have stolen away from the wheat fields and have become strap-hangers and movie fans. The man who used to sit on the top of a reaper and guide the destinies of a hundred blades through a furrow is now sitting in a dark room watching Doug Fairbanks act as if he was really happy.

And the cities have felt secure. Swollen in their

arrogance, they have thought that all they had to do was to touch a bell and the waiter would come from Nebraska, with a tray full of lilies of the valley, pomegranates, corn meal, asbestos, or whatever makes a good smart salad.

New York knew that this was coming. New York wanted to be safe in its insularity and selfishness, so it had itself grown on an island. It was started by a lot of Dutch farmers who said: "We know what it is to be lonesome. Very well. We'll make this place look like real money and nobody can take it away from us."

Now New York thinks it is immune.

"Here I am," says New York, "contributing nothing to the world but jazz, journalism, and jesters, supported by all, the great consumer of all the ages. My streets are filled with stragglers from the remotest corners of the continent. Who shall say me nay?"

But some of the best buildings in New York are getting restless. Pretty soon they will all go on strike. They are not only entitled to a vacation but the country needs them.

What they need in Kansas is Greenwich Village. Then why not let Greenwich go to Kansas? It could be reassembled in the midst of the farming district, and there, after they have been working in the wheat fields and sporting with the razor-backed

hogs, the embattled farmers could motor in the evening and get what they want.

Why not put the Ritz-Carleton on wheels and give it one-night stands in the most prolific regions of Nebraska? This is how the Ritz feels about it:

"I should love it. I should rejoice in moving about over the prairies and, knowing that I was near enough to solace them with my manners and decorations, it would comfort me to think that I was helping them on their job. Now I am only a New Yorker. Let me be a citizen of the whole country."

Other cities, inspired by this noble example, would soon follow suit.

Think of all the athletic clubs, those hotbeds of bridge and swimming pools and billiards and sporting gossip—with a few dumb-bells on the side—making tours through farm lands so that men who had been toiling through the day by the sweat of their brows could put on their Tuxedoes at night and listen to jazz bands and jazz ladies and jazz celebrities!

Think of little old New York being of some use to the country after all these years—and this in spite of itself! folding its tent like Barnum's circus and silently stealing away to the West and South. Maybe we wouldn't have enough to eat then!

I spoke to the Woolworth Building about it, and

the Woolworth Building said: "I have a little song that I will sing to you. I hope you will like it."

And this is the

Song of the Woolworth Building

I AM THE GUARDIAN OF THE WESTERN WORLD. I AM THE HIGH SENTINEL OF BIG BUSINESS. THE STATUE OF LIBERTY COWERS BEFORE ME.

REJOICE, O STATES, IN THE SPLENDOUR OF MY COMMERCIAL MAJESTY. AND YET TOO LONG HAVE I ALSO BEEN A NEW YORKER.

ACROSS THE FIELDS OF GOLDEN GRAIN I BECKON TO THE PACIFIC. FARMERS, AWAIT MY COMING. DELAY NOT THE TOIL.

GARNER THE WHEAT. I SHALL COME AMONG THEE. I AM A CITIZEN OF THE LAND.

REJOICE THAT I AM NOT ROOTED TO THE SPOT WHERE I WAS BORN. MY DUTY HENCEFORTH LIES WITH THEE.

FOLLOW ME INTO THE FIELDS, YE CITY DWELLERS, THAT TOGETHER WE MAY SAVE THE SOIL.

HAIL, STATES! MY SHADOW SHALL NOT GROW LESS AMONG YOU!

AN INTERRUPTED ARGUMENT

EXTRAVAGANCE and Economy met.

"I wonder," said Extravagance, who had a broad-minded outlook on life, "whether there is any way that we can get together?"

"I am afraid not," said Economy, naturally close-mouthed.

"I am willing to try," said Extravagance. "I have long been curious to meet you. Now that I have a good view, you seem to me to be a strangely ignoble-looking creature."

"Possibly. But all the logic is on my side."

"And Nature is on mine. The sun, for example, is one of my votaries. Think of how the sun wastes. He is a terrible spendthrift, in rays. What makes you believe that all the logic is on your side?"

"Well, think of all the mistakes people have made following you. But nobody ever made a mistake following me."

"Why, my dear friend, how can you make such an assertion? All the big things have been done through me. I have absolute command of courage and vision. What you acquire is done by caution and narrowness."

How long their argument would have lasted nobody knows, but at this moment they were interrupted by a cheerful stranger. He smiled upon them both so pleasantly that they stopped short.

"You're both wrong," said the stranger. "All the big things have been done by both of you. You've often worked together, only you haven't seen each other. I know, because I've been there."

"Who are you?"

The stranger grinned.

"My name is Happy Medium."

THE IMPOSSIBLES

A PURELY IMAGINARY TALE OF SUBURBAN LIFE

FOR some weeks Billington—who lived in a growing suburban town—had noticed a coolness among his neighbours. Old friends, who were in the habit of coming up and chatting with him when he took his morning train, no longer approached him. One morning, however, as he stood on the platform by himself, vainly wondering what was the matter with the world, Dilber, who lived within three doors, came up and said significantly:

"A word with you."

"Proceed," said Billington, with proud coolness, as they entered the train and sank simultaneously into the same seat.

"I am sorry to say it," said Dilber, "but you are not the right kind of a man we want in our community."

"What do you mean?" said Billington.

Dilber, who had evidently been commissioned to do his duty, leaned over and whispered:

"It's just this. You were asked to run for the Board of Education, and you refused. You were requested to become a member of the town council,

and you refused; you were asked to run for Freeholder and you refused. You wouldn't even join the Civic League. I am not going to say anything more now. Just think it over. We want to be perfectly fair, of course, but every citizen must do his share. Good morning."

Before he knew it Billington was alone. Dilber, having conveyed what was undoubtedly a warning, disappeared into another car. Billington pondered all the way to the office and through his morning's mail on what Dilber had said.

That night at dinner Mrs. Billington said to him: "This morning I was called on by two ladies. What do you suppose they said?"

Billington, wiser than he seemed, answered:

"I'll bet I know; they came to tell you that you hadn't joined something."

His wife opened her eyes.

"That's precisely it," she exclaimed, "though I can't imagine how you guessed it; they said I did not belong to the woman's club, although I had been asked, and there were a lot of other societies which I had declined to belong to."

"I was told the same thing."

"What shall we do?"

Whatever Billington's other shortcomings might be, he was at least a keen business man.

"My dear," he said at last, "one thing is certain.

We are no longer wanted. That being the case, now is the time to sell out and move away to some more desirable place, where we will be more fully appreciated."

In another hour they were sitting in the office of the local real-estate dealer.

This gentleman's face brightened.

"Quite remarkable," he said with a smile, "to think that you should have come in just at this moment, for I have a man who wants to buy your house. What is your price?"

Billington named a figure two thousand dollars more than he paid for it.

"Done."

The preliminary payment was made and the papers signed. Then Billington, rising with his wife, turned to the real-estate man.

"We have lived in this town for the past five years," he said. "During this period we have never created the slightest disturbance; we have gone about our affairs quietly, and have refused to mix up in what did not concern us. I, on my part, have kept out of politics, and my wife has kept out of all the new woman's fads. Nobody can cast the slightest aspersion upon us as neighbours. Now, sir, will you, out of the depth of your experience and knowledge of this place, tell me what in the world is the matter with us?"

"Don't you know?" said the real-estate man.

"No, sir, I don't."

"Well, I'll tell you; you are the only people who live here who strictly mind your own business. Isn't that enough?"

WELL, WHY IS WALL STREET?

HAS Wall Street a sense of humour? She has been portrayed as a nervous old lady starting at the slightest noise, afraid of her own shadow, so timid that a change of wind is likely to make her jump out of her skin.

There are a great many people who do not understand what Wall Street really is. Some say it is a national vermiform appendix, and ought to be removed. Others declare that it is an exhaust pipe and a necessary outlet to keep the ship of state from blowing up.

Wall Street is a place where you can buy and sell something you haven't got with money that you don't see from people that you never meet. One man nods to another, and either you are broke, or you can go on buying real food.

Nobody sits down in Wall Street, yet the seats are worth about eighty thousand each. You buy one for the privilege of standing up and throwing fits. The word "broker" is derived from "broke," which means that the only time a broker is broke is when he is not a broker—that is, when he becomes a bull, a bear, or a lamb. As long as he does nothing but buy and sell for others, he is safe. No broker will

admit that he does anything else. Yet most brokers do. Many people also think that Wall Street is a branch of the Zoo. In addition to the bulls, bears, and lambs, they have sharks and wildcats. The animals are supposed to live on paper, and to absorb large quantities of water. The public is also the goat.

It will be seen from this that Wall Street is not always what it seems to be. It is not apparently a respector of persons, and yet it is undoubtedly truer to some than to others. It is moody, variable, fickle as a weather cock; and yet from hour to hour and from day to day it declares it knows what everyone is worth in dollars and cents, no matter how humble or remote that person may be. It is affected by the climate of Manchuria, and the feelings of folks in India and Egypt bear upon its decisions. An atmospheric pressure over Iceland, or a stabbing affray in Bulgaria may, through Wall Street, reach into the homes of America and send little children supperless to bed.

A movement to abolish Wall Street has long been contemplated by highly intelligent people. For one thing, Wall Street is a part of New York and it is generally felt that this leaves it open to grave suspicion.

If, however, instead of being restricted, it could be made to include millinery, ladies' garments, shoes

and hosiery, furs and jewellery, and placed in charge of some lady as President, who had her husband's interest at heart, the process of saving this country from financial ruin might be put on a business basis.

At present a man may know at any moment how many shares of stock have been bought and sold for him, and how much he has won or lost, but when he comes home at night his wife's financial transactions leave him guessing. A woman's Wall Street, with the price of every hat listed, would certainly add to the joys of home life, besides lifting up the conversation of women to the high level of big business.

Two ladies would meet with the following results:

"What do you think of Ostrich plumes preferred?"

"Trifle heavy. Do *you* know anything?"

"I bought a couple of beauties yesterday on margin. I'm looking for a big rise."

"I suppose you'll pyramid. But be careful and look out for a slump. Parisian models second debenture stood me in for a ten-point loss; fortunately I made good on a sport skirt I sold short. But I must say, my dear, the market is soft and I advise you to be careful."

"Trust me for that. But I must give you a piece of inside news. You know Bessie Smartling. Well, she tried to corner the market in husbands' sack suits common. Suddenly, however, someone began

a big selling movement, the bottom dropped out, and it will take her months to recuperate."

"Serves her right to bother with male holdings; as for me, I stick to legitimate offerings. Men may have to stop wearing clothes at any time, but even when women do stop, they will buy them just the same."

Wall Street, indeed, is but the narrowest expression of a universal activity. Wall Street expresses itself only in dollars and cents, but it stands as a representative of the gambling instinct inherent in mankind. And the singular part of it is that the men who are engaged in it are quite largely philosophers. As an offset to the nervous strain of the exchange, they seek outside methods of mental tranquillity. I know a broker devoted to the classics; another who has a fine collection of Whistlers. These gentlemen indeed rarely talk business; it is only the so-called "trader," the man who "dabbles," whose conversation is interlarded with "shorts" and "futures" and "tips" and private deals.

Human beings, old and young, feelings, sentiments, heart burnings, jealousies, loves, and hates are bought and sold every day in the great human mart. Yet there is no accredited Wall Street of humanity, as well there might be. If there were, we might open our paper in the morning and read our market letter in human values:

Yesterday the market in human beings reached to various influences, many of them invisible and others more apparent. Politicians were offered freely, the bid and asked quotations being far apart: toward noon there was a wide selling movement with little support, but accompanied by later rallies resulting in substantial gains.

Slums ruled firm, there being no appreciable diminution in the supply, and child labour common was freely offered in large quantities, the demand, however, keeping the market well up. Husbands preferred was among the attractions, advancing some ten points under pressure and Western buying orders, while Suffragettes continued their popularity shown early in the week. In the early afternoon there was a distinct slump, notably a fall in school teachers common demoralizing the entire list: military securities were also weak. Among the high-price specialties very closely held may be mentioned Society Queens and Débutante Firsts, a large pool in the latter having been developed by a few of our leading millionaries. Just before the close the market broke.

It is the custom of various gentlemen, who, like the side shows around the main tent, offer their wares to the public, to send out weekly financial letters in which the prospects for buying and selling are set forth with great skill. It seems a sad lack of business acumen on our part, especially with our commercial reputation, that nobody has sought to do this with regard to those matters which are supposed to make us really happy or unhappy. It is not improbable, however, that the reason for this is because no material results are brought into view.

Yet, after all, why is it not important that our

future gamble with fate should be reinforced by the kindly services of the expert?

For example:

OUR WEEKLY HUMAN SERVICE LETTER.
(*Follow our advice closely, and you will be well repaid.*)

The prospect for early adjustment of all matters of the heart must be considered along with the reports from osculation centres, which bear out what we said last week, vampires still ruling strong and the cost of domestic goods making all unions precarious. While mothers-in-law and aunts continue firm, honeymoons have gone up and all offsprings are at the owner's risk. Wedding exchanges are lively, with few takers, however, and parents continue to be active.

WHEN YOU PROPOSE

COMPLETE GUIDE TO OPENERS FOR THE USE OF TACTFUL PERSONS

"I DO not wish to alarm you unnecessarily, but the fatal moment has at last arrived."

"Shall I draw my chair closer? I am afraid that what I am now about to say to you, if overheard by others, might be the cause of vulgar comment."

"Do you remember the first day we met? Ah! How vividly it rises to my mind! Well, since then——"

"Don't be startled, but would you mind if I called you darling?"

"Doesn't it seem rather warm to you? But perhaps I feel it more because I am about to perform an action which has the most momentous consequences of a lifetime—for both of us!"

"Do you know this is the twenty-third call I have made? I suppose we must both begin to realize that this cannot go on forever. Well, dear——"

"How cold your hand is to-night! Ha! It isn't much like my heart, I can tell you! Speaking of hearts——"

"I hope you didn't mind my coming so early. But the fact is, I have a terrible evening before me. That is, I mean—oh——"

"Struggle as I will, I can no longer conceal from you the fact that——"

"Isn't that a new rug? Oh, no! You must pardon me, but ever since we first met, nothing has looked the same to me. And now——"

THE BROWN BEAR EXPLAINS

"WHAT I don't understand," said the hippo, as he displaced nearly all of the water in his bathtub, "is what we've done."

The visitors had not yet arrived at the Zoo, and in the big animal house the usual early-morning conversation was taking place.

"I have an idea," said a small gray wolf across the way, "that they think we're dangerous."

"Nonsense!" growled the lion, pacing up and down and swishing his tail angrily. "If there's one thing we all pride ourselves upon when we are home it is minding our own business. As for my own family, human beings are an acquired taste. It is only when they force themselves into our domain that we eat them. They go to immense pains to take us prisoners—and for what, as you sagely remark, Hippo? What, I wonder, is our particular crime?"

The brown bear now spoke up.

"They do it to their own kind," he now asserted.

"What!" exclaimed everybody. "Impossible!"

"Yes," persisted the brown bear. "It's true. Of course, you see a lot of folks who are free to wan-

der about, who pass here every day—apparently for the sole purpose of taunting and annoying us—but the day I came here I observed a curious thing. At least it furnished me with an object for philosophical reflection."

"Go on!" exclaimed everybody. Even the sloth looked up.

"Well," continued the brown bear, "on my way I passed a large, massive stone building, with heavy iron bars, such as we have here in front of every window. There was a high stone fence all around, with a path on top of it, and keepers walking back and forth armed with guns. Inside were a lot of human beings confined there just as we are. Also there were free people passing in, apparently to poke sticks at them as they do to us. So, you see, these humans do it to their own kind. Singular, isn't it?"

There was a considerable silence. Finally the rhino, who shared with the bear a philosophical temperament, asked:

"How do you account for it?"

"I think I have the solution," said the brown bear. "At any rate, even if it isn't true, nobody here will be able to contradict me in a matter where nobody can really tell. But at least it is an interesting theory, and I am entitled to believe it, because I have spent more time than the rest of you in thinking it out."

"Go on!" chorused everybody.

The brown bear smiled.

"Simply this," he replied. "These people that we see moving about freely, without being confined, are all of them bad people, with no virtues, but full of criminal instincts. That is plain to all of us. They have bad manners, they are common, cheap, vulgar, and in fact, utterly impossible. Look how they stare at us, and what they do and say! But they, mind you, are in the majority. Now we, as my friend the lion has just pointed out so ably, always mind our own business. We are truly virtuous. They can't stand this. It offends their nasty little pride—makes them jealous. Therefore they go out and capture us and lock us up. They do the same to their own kind. Those they lock up are the really good ones, just like us, who mind our own affairs."

"Your conclusion," said the rhino, "appears to me to be strictly logical and in accordance with all the observed facts and circumstances. But there is just one little thing I should like to ask you: If what you say is true, why don't they kill us all off at once instead of keeping us cooped up—at considerable expense—merely to look at?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the brown bear. "I was hoping that you would enable me to bring out that thought. You see, my friends, that is the whole point. These people are not aware of what I have been saying. They are all labouring under a delusion. They think

that they are good and that we whom they keep confined in cages and jails are vicious, and they don't kill us because of their morbid curiosity, which is part and parcel with all their badness. They take a certain kind of degenerate pleasure in looking at those they are deluded into believing are worse than they are."

"As if such a thing were possible!" said the lion.

But at this point the conversation was interrupted by the opening of the doors and the appearance of a diminutive human being who cried with great gusto:

"Extra! All about the great divorce case!"

BOYS

THIS IS GOOD TO SKIP—IF YOU DON'T LIKE BOYS. ALSO, IT'S A LITTLE SERIOUS

ALL the world loves a boy—but are you sure you know what a boy is? Think of learning as much as a man learns in a lifetime and forgetting the most important thing of all—how to continue to be a boy!

When we picture nations or collections of people generally, we always picture them as grown men. We say that Japan is a race of little men. We picture Russia as inhabited by a race of semi-giants, with blue eyes and blond whiskers. Perhaps the nearest approach to our thinking of men as boys was in our own army. We saw them in the training camps and on the march, we saw how young they looked, and we were actually forced to think of them —perhaps momentarily—as boys. In the distance they became men again.

Manual labour of almost any kind ages human beings rapidly. If you look at a gang of labourers working in the street, at first glance they will all seem old. It is only when you come to study them

carefully that you will see that they are not really so old as they look; and pretty soon you will discern boys among them. So it is that among the workers a large proportion of the individuals are boys, and if you come to think of them in this way you will be amazed to discover that your whole conception of society, of government, of politics, and of humanity in general has undergone a very substantial change. The boys are the ones who are doing the work of the world. It is, therefore, of great importance to know what a boy is. And do not be too sure that you do know. It's a wise father who knows his own child, and the wise fathers are not over-plenty. If you are a man, you never think of yourself as a boy. Furthermore, you can scarcely remember the time when you thought of yourself as a boy. That is one reason why, when you think of collections of other men, you do not think of them as boys. The probability is that your wife thinks of you as a boy when she doesn't think of you as a baby. Your wife has you sized up all right. It is hard to fool any woman about boys. A woman knows when a boy is a boy—which is most of the time—and no old boy posing as a grown man can get away with it with a woman. So you see a nice, delicate, graceful girl knowing just how to handle some pompous old general, with his chest covered with medals and subject to an eight-inch expansion, before an admiring crowd. She isn't

fooled for a moment in the presence of such an overpowering personality. She knows that he is only a boy, she knows how foolish he can act, and he also knows that the grandstand stuff carries no weight with her. He can fool other men, but not the girls. And he does fool, not only the other men, but himself.

And this is precisely the thing that makes fathers so often go wrong with regard to their boys. For even when you think of your boy, you don't think of him as being a boy, but as being subject to the same standards as your own. You want him to measure up to these standards, and when he doesn't you lose your temper and denounce him. And the boy goes off somewhere and sulks; or he leaves home altogether. What every father doesn't know about his boy would fill a large book.

The first thing we must get into our heads is just what all the boys are doing and what they are that makes them do it in the way they are doing it. You see a lot of young fellows hanging around a railroad station, ranging in age from seventeen to twenty-three or twenty-four. They are all "boys." They look like loafers, and for the time being they are. Most of them are smoking cigarettes; yet in other moments it is astonishing how they can toss off work as if it were mere nothing.

Now the one thing about a boy that is character-

istic is this—his apparent indifference, his offhandedness, his sweeping aside with a gesture—what? Well, everything that gets in his way. "Forget it!": that's his favourite term. He is absolutely proof against being bored, for he will grin insolently in the face of any long-winded philosophy, or indeed any attempt at definition. Words weary him. He calls this sort of thing "guff." And he comes nearer being right than generations of seers; for the seers have been trying for a long time to adjust things, and the boy has their number. He has it instinctively, and that is only one of many things that he has instinctively.

For one thing, you can't frighten him. No prediction of panic or disaster has the slightest weight with him. He is out for a good time, he is running after the girls and sorting them out as he once did with his "pures" (and finding doubtless a great many nicks); he is playing craps and the races and other things, and he is going to church or preserving the appearance of outward rectitude just as much as it is necessary to do so. Of course, he is not "bad." He is too healthy to be that. Or if he is "bad" it is because he has been under-nourished as a baby, and subjected generally to degenerative physical influences. But a boy who is just plain boy is superior to everything in heaven and earth because he has not acquired the art of learning how to be afraid. He hasn't got gun-shy. He can do anything he wants

to without caring about the consequences. And the singular thing is that while he is rattling along at his own pace he is the real force that moves the world. Remove this boy from all the work that is being done in the world, and the rest would be a pitiful thing. And yet he does it as an aside.

You know what they say in the movies when you are doing a thing just right—"hold that!" Well, if you could hold that boy stuff all your life, you'd be a superman. Indeed, that is the principal test of greatness—to keep on being a boy, and never get over it. All the big fellows have been that way. When you see a man bent over with the problems of the world, with a line of indigestion reaching from his nose to a corner of his mouth, and he tells you that we can't hold out much longer, that he is going to sell out everything before to-morrow night—then you are listening to a shell. He sounds hollow and he looks hollow. Nothing of that goes with a boy. He tears off whatever comes his way, and it's all in a day's doings. It's only when he gets broken to harness that he begins to show signs of weakness. And when he becomes a man he is only good with the remains of a boy that are left in him and that he cannot get rid of. You never quite kill the boy in a man. When you do, he goes to the bone-yard.

It's a strange thing, therefore, that when fathers are contending with their boys they don't know that

they are contending with something bigger than themselves. What most men have learned only stands in the way of their knowing what they ought to about boys. When a boy has gotten over being one and has become a man, he develops a kind of acquired courage, a manufactured article that he uses proudly, as a shield, and puts it at the foot of his bed when he goes to sleep. The boy has nothing of that sort. His courage is not manufactured—it is only an absence of fear.

Every generation makes its own standards, due to its heritage and the force of circumstances. It has its vocabulary, its manners, and its morals, these being mostly the result of climate and economics. It tries to fasten all these things on the generation that is coming, and it partly succeeds. It doesn't quite succeed. The difference, the margin, is very slight. It is so slight that you can scarcely detect it; but that is what constitutes progress. The boy isn't quite cured. He leaves something of his essence and his spirit, before it is beaten out of him, and that thing persists.

In this world things go by contraries. You don't believe it? Let me illustrate. You don't see the boys trying to teach their elders. To these elders they are absolutely indifferent, except so far as they can get out of them what they want—usually expressed in terms of dollars and cents. A boy lets

his father alone to go his own way. You don't hear a boy lecturing the old man on how late he is sitting up nights. The boy may know that the old man is a hypocrite and a liar—that he is posing as being an exemplary member when in reality he is a skunk. The boy may secretly despise him—but the boy doesn't take the old fellow aside and give him a piece of advice. There isn't very much about the old man that the boy doesn't know. But he makes no show of it, he hasn't got time for it. It is dull stuff. When, therefore, the old man tries to teach the boy, the boy listens with lack-lustre eye. And when the old man denounces him, the boy is intensely bored. The best thing the old man can do, if he did but know it, is to keep his mouth shut, but he hasn't sense enough. All that is the man part of him. The best fathers are those who are still boys, like their sons. When they are this, they can do a lot for the boys. Logically speaking, a man's experience ought to be worth something. What a fellow has learned through a lifetime by a series of hard knocks ought to be of some use to his boy. Yet it very seldom is. The worse of it is that he invariably blames the boy for not making use of it.

Wouldn't you think that any man, when he discovers that his own boy is not getting any good out of his previous experience, would at least look about him and discover if he is the exception to the rule?

Instead of that, he makes comparisons, which are the worst thing he could make. He says to the boy: "Pity you can't learn from me; look at Johnny Jones—he's a model boy, because he looks up to his father and does as his father wants him to. Pity that you can't be like Johnny Jones! All you got to do is to follow in my footsteps and you'll be all right. That's what Johnny Jones is doing."

The probability is that Johnny Jones is not doing that sort of thing at all, but only fooling the old man. Johnny Jones looks like a perfectly good boy, but you never can tell. In about ten years he may be robbing a bank. That's the trouble about boys. No prediction you can make about them is safe. And it takes such a long time to find out whether you have guessed right or not, that you may all be dead before you know. The only thing you can do is to take boys as they are, and get them placed right. They have got one thing—*youth*—that appears to beat every other possession out of sight. And we wonder why we cannot all keep this thing. Why not? Youth doesn't mean that you may not be dead to-morrow. A boy makes nothing of death. He has no mind for it. So far as he is concerned, death is a thing that simply doesn't exist. Yet think of how he meets it—with that wonderful indifference, that sublime carelessness and irresponsibility, a waving of it aside! No death-bed scene for him.

He jumps into his machine, the engine whirrs, he sits a little tighter, and with a smile on his face, he is off to his rendezvous with death, too busy with the present moment to dwell upon what may be almost a certainty. That is the way those boys went to Zeebrugge—that is the way all boys go. So that the thing we call youth might just as well be enjoyed by an old man as not—if he only knew how. I repeat: Think of learning as much as a man learns in a lifetime, and forgetting the most important thing of all—how to continue to be a boy! That ought to show us that what we acquire in the way of knowledge is of no consequence—it means nothing alongside of an *attitude*. It isn't where you are going, where you came from, what you are doing that counts, but it's the way you hold yourself.

Yet we old fellows, we grown-ups, must have something about us that is worth while. We cannot utterly and completely be dismissed as being no good on earth. The boys can learn from us if they only would or if we only had the sense to tell them how. We ought to be interesting to them, but somehow we are not. If we are interesting to them it is because we have forgotten for the moment that we are anything else but what they are. Yet what we know is substantial, and worth while their learning. So at least it seems.

It is really like the difference between capital and

labour. Youth represents labour, and old age the accumulated capital of wisdom and experience. Age is willing to give up what it has to youth without even an exchange. Age knows that it has lost its youth through its own folly and thinks, in its foolishness, that youth will accept this thing called experience.

But how can you expect a boy to learn anything from a man when the man has given up voluntarily—or because he didn't know any better—the one thing that makes the boy superior to him, namely *youth?*

You have seen old men who have not given up their youth, so you know the thing can be done. You don't see these youthful old men go about preaching disaster. They are always ready to play. And you don't hear them reading sermons to their boys—they are too busy tossing the ball to them. It is from this kind of men that the boys can learn; and therefore if a man wishes to be any good in the world, he must keep his youth, if he gives up everything else. He may lose his hair and his teeth, but he must keep his youth. Youth is a mental possession and nobody can take it away from you if you say not. When you keep it, the boy respects it in you more than anything else, and he will listen to you more readily because he knows that you have got something he may use. He isn't going to listen to any man who has lost his youth, no matter how much wisdom that man may boast of; that man is discredited.

That is why when a father has occasion to punish his boy, he should not do it as a father, but as another boy. That is to say, the punishment should come from one who has something to impart and not from one who has something to withhold. If a father gives his boy a licking (and it has by no means been established that a licking is not, after all, a good thing) he should give it because it stands for the kind of thing that the boy ought to have. It is as much as to say: "Here is all my experience and wisdom; you, the boy, fail to take advantage of it; I must therefore pound it into you."

The boy, you know, really can learn something from his father. A licking may call his attention to this fact much more effectively than in any other way; it is a means of arresting his attention not to be despised. It may be the best thing the father has, if he uses it early enough and wisely enough; and yet it does not speak much for the accumulated wisdom of man when the best thing a father can do to his son is to subjugate him, teach him so early this lesson of benevolent assimilation—for benevolent assimilation, so called, usually means a sound thrashing somewhere along the line. "I will whale the life out of you," says the old man. "When you grow up and want to impart your principle to others, that is what you must do to them. It's the only way." And so, if the boy learns his prayers at

his mother's knee, he learns his militarism at his father's.

These boys that, if we look closely, we see all around us—on the street corners, in the railroad stations, lolling and loafing, and marching and toiling and fighting—these boys might be willing to learn a great deal more from us if they believed in us more. And why is it that they do not? Because they see too clearly our failure. We came before them to clear the ground. It is through us that they have come, and if they talked or reasoned about it all, this is what they would say: "Why is it, that, even before we are born you make the conditions so that we don't have an even chance with so many of the others?"

Take us as a whole, we fathers, and what have we done, or what are we doing, for all the boys who are yet unborn, but who will surely come? We say to the boys who are already here:

"Come, you must be like us."

If they said anything at all in reply, they would jeer and say:

"Like you, eh? And what have you done for us? You spend your time in wrangling over politics, in robbing each other, in fighting for privilege. You are ready to make no concessions among yourselves; the result is that the majority of us are being born in your manufactured slums, and after we are born

you come and preach to us and tell us that you wish we would be like you. To hell with you!"

And what is the thing that we preach to the boy? We tell him to avoid temptation; we point to the gambling house, to the race track, to the den of vice, and we did point to the corner saloon, but that's been covered up. We point to all these things and tell the boy he must avoid them, when we ourselves are the ones who placed them there. No wonder the boy doesn't quite know what to think of us. Moreover, if he did think much about it he would say:

"Not only have you manufactured all these temptations for our use, but you have actually created the conditions under which we are being born, so that we are not physically able to cope with them."

We have done even more than this. Most of us are too busy to teach the boys ourselves. We are trying to make enough money to make sure of spoiling them in case all other means fail. And so, when we cannot teach them ourselves, we get others to do it for us; and then we make the conditions so impossible for the others that they cannot live. If we, the taxpayers, are the ones who pay our school teachers, and we don't pay them enough to keep body and soul together while they are teaching our boys something that we shirk from teaching them ourselves, then we have only ourselves to blame. And if our boys are

insolent, irresponsible, lazy, and dishonest, who else is to blame but us?

The manners of our young people is a favourite topic of conversation, and a favourite thesis for essayists. They are pretty bad. Granted. But where did they get them?

The manners of American children are said to be worse than those of any other people. The American child abroad has been an object for satire and derision. The reason is largely economic. It is because America has the greatest natural resources, and is therefore the richest country, that it produces—or tolerates—the worst manners in its young people. I have a friend who has two sons. Up to the time when the first son was about sixteen the father had to struggle and this boy had to go to work. But he, the old man, suddenly began making money, and when the second son came along, there was enough to send him through college, buy him a car, etc. The result was that he became a ne'er-do-well, while the first boy developed character and became an asset.

In the scheme of things as they are, is the boy important? Do you know of anything that is more so? So far as I am concerned, a boy is the most beautiful thing in nature. You can get more kinds of emotions and sensations in reflecting upon a boy than in any other way. He stands as the epitome of the race. He moves the world along. All things

that come out of mankind are inherent in him. This being so, let us find out what we can do about him, where we are deficient, where he is deficient, and where he can be improved, or at least given a proper opportunity.

You cannot force a boy. If you tamper with him too much, you will ruin him. Think of the smug satisfaction that so many of us have betrayed over the fact that we have abolished the corner saloon, and then how far along that is in the boy's life! Why, before he reaches the saloon he has been moulded into what he will be. Whiskey, in so many cases, is only quickening the process of a man's decay. As long as the slums remain, our boys are the victims. Every boy, so says the Constitution, is entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Does he get it? He gets life, slavery, and the pursuit of demigods, politicians, prize fighters, and thugs. Or, if his parents have too much money, then he gets gambling, gasoline, and gout.

But all this is general, and we certainly cannot alter the world in a jiffy. By the time things are getting better, we shall all of us be dead and a new generation will come to upset all the start we have made. The main point is, what can we do now with our boys just as they are? If you have a boy, the thing that you may decide to do for him this afternoon may have a bearing upon his whole life. Then you ought to

know something about him, and about yourself. Are you sure that you are doing the right thing? Are you doing anything at all? Have you given him over to others, or do you believe—as a large proportion of fathers undoubtedly believe—that the boy gets along best if he is allowed to shift for himself?

The boy is without doubt the most interesting subject in the world. Then why isn't he more discussed? Most fathers are reticent about their boys, because they are frankly in doubt. They don't quite know what to think. They wish to wait until the returns are all in. If they say anything, it is usually in discreet praise. Whatever other boys are, your boy is all right. He has never done anything to cause you any trouble. How seldom is there a father who will ever admit anything else but that? When they do admit it, they go too far the other way. If a man really gets mad at his boy, then often he cannot say enough against him. He seems to take a certain amount of satisfaction in letting everybody know that the boy is no longer anything in his life. "I have done everything that man can do," he will say, "and look how he has repaid me! Now he can go his own way. I can't do anything more for him."

That is really what each one of us who has a boy wants to know: Can we do anything more for him? Have we done too much already? Have we withheld anything or put the emphasis on the wrong spot?

Let us consider boys as they are for a moment, just to get some sort of a line on them.

You can divide them roughly into two groups—the good and the bad boys. Even this is uncertain because the bad boys of to-day may be the good boys of to-morrow. I know a boy who was thrown out of school for theft not so many years ago, and generally disgraced. Only two men in his own home town stuck by him and neither of them was his father. But the two outsiders were enough. One of them got him a job, and then he went to France. Now he is back again, making good at forty dollars a week.

It is nothing against the great army of mediocre men to say that once they were all good boys—that they did what their fathers and mothers asked them to do—that they "minded." And it may not be anything in favour of some of the large "great" boys when we know that in their younger days they were considered very bad.

There is such a thing in life as getting your second nerve. The first nerve is there unconsciously. That is what I meant when I said that a boy had an absence of fear. But pretty soon in his life there comes a test and it remains to be seen whether he will survive. If he gets his second nerve he will be all right after that. Nerve is a peculiar thing in the life of a boy. It's something that he appears to develop

suddenly, but after all it is only the outcome of a long previous home influence. He is brought short up against an utterly new condition; then it comes out whether he is "yellow" or not. Instead of "laying down" he will rise to the occasion in the most astonishing manner. And that is the most popular theme in the romance of boyhood. It's the story of the mistaken old man who casts off his boy, who, thrown on the world, suddenly becomes a millionaire and gets back in the nick of time to pay off the mortgage. That's a grand story, and we never tire of it. The reason we like it is that it is true. We know that in so many cases the boy is really superior to the old man. He hasn't had time to acquire all the ignorance that is bothering the old man, clogging up his mind, making him mulish and impossible. The boy is fresh. He has a new point of view. The conventions that his father has become used to and that are a part of his life have all got to be tested out by the boy before he accepts them. He isn't taking anything for granted. Why should he? He sees a very imperfectly man-made world, a world of profiteering, and inequality, and slums, intermixed with gross extravagance, and he says to himself, "If good men like my old man are responsible for this world, I'll look him over pretty closely before I swallow all the line of talk he is going to hand out to me." Can you blame him?

But granting all that, and freely admitting that we are all of us miserable sinners, we are willing to take our boys, just as they are now, and do everything that we can for them to help them make a better world. So far as the world itself is concerned, we are more or less up against it. It isn't the kind of a world that we individually would have made. At present it appears to be pretty well upside down.

But whatever good there is left in it, we know that this good was preserved for us by these, our boys. They did it. They would have gone on being killed for ever and for ever, to defend what we and they believed to be right. This being so, we certainly owe it to them, considering that they do the real work, to help to make them as good as they can be made.

And the way isn't made any easier for us by the psychologists and the school men, the professors and the half-baked theorists who think they know something. This is a case of getting right down to brass tacks, of between father and son, and the tumult and the shouting won't do any good. Throw away the books, face each other, and have it out fairly and squarely.

Just what are you going to do for your boy? How are you going to treat him? How much money are you going to give him? When are you going to begin on him? And when are you going to leave off? Is there any rule?

I know a man who nursed his boy as a baby, watched over him as a child, and when the boy grew up made a close companion of him. The two were inseparable. And what happened? The boy as soon as he got loose, at about eighteen, forged his father's name, ran away afterward, and joined the navy and then deserted. Yet during his entire youth his father never had occasion to raise his voice to that boy. There never was anything between them but gentleness and courtesy.

A man who had four sons said to me that every-one of them was lazy and shiftless until he was over twenty, and then they all gradually took a turn for the better and came out all right. A boy is the product of heredity and environment, and some slight thing early in his life may determine the course of it afterward. But there are several things about boys that it is just as well to know offhand. One of them is this:

Every pronounced trait that a boy has, has its opposite concealed somewhere inside of him and you never can tell when the opposite will come to the surface. Sometimes two traits that are diametrically opposite will be working in a boy at the same time, and producing opposite results. For example, a boy I know was careless and irresponsible at home; he threw his clothes about and couldn't be trusted to mail a letter. But in the office he was reliable, and

took charge of large sums of money. When his attention was called to the discrepancy he replied, "Oh, well, that's different." Of course, it was different. He did what he had to.

And that is the secret of most boys. They are cautious to a degree when it comes to trying out things that are distasteful. Where their curiosity is aroused they will go the limit to find out. It is often an evidence of weakness in a boy when he conforms too readily to conditions. Therefore, when you see a good boy, don't be so sure of him. Character isn't developed by conformity to conditions but by resistance. Subjected to a series of tests, a boy will either fail or succeed. And do not make the mistake of believing that the boy doesn't think. He is the most powerful thinking machine in the world. He isn't voluble, but that doesn't matter. The point is that he really wants help. It would surprise you to know how much he wants it. He wants facts, and if he becomes a skeptic it is because his father has failed to supply him with the right facts. That is the trouble with most fathers—they do not tell their boys the truth. How many fathers are there who will acknowledge their own weaknesses to their boys? Yet these weaknesses are perfectly plain to the boy, and it is just because of this fact that he is bewildered when his father really tells him the truth. He doesn't know whether to believe him or not. The first thing

that a father ought to be to his boy is reliable and accurate. You think it is easy to be this? Try it. The moment your boy asks you a leading question, you will find yourself beginning to hedge. Then you will excuse yourself mentally by saying that you had to do it, because society is so formed that we must live up to certain things whether we believe in them or not.

It is the hardest thing in the world to be accurate, especially where your relationship with others is a close one. You are a quivering mass of more or less controlled emotions and prejudices. If your boy has a dispute with his mother (and those things occur whether they are mentioned in the story books or not) then what are you to do? Whom are you going to stick by? In that apparently simple situation lies the destiny of many a boy. A very large proportion of all our divorces are caused because people don't know how to be accurate. A boy's home life is the greatest influence he has. Therefore, the attitude of his father toward his mother is fundamental. And in a case like this, there is only one way, and that is to tell the truth no matter where it may lead you.

A father has got to be a just judge. He has got to weigh both sides at all times, sift the evidence, reserve his decision until he knows where he stands, and then tell the truth. It is this power of decision

over our daily actions that makes us real men. You cannot impart it to your boy unless you have it yourself. When he sees you, in any given situation, struggling without prejudice to get a right judgment, he is going to sit up and take notice of you. That is the reason why a father should rarely pronounce judgment at the time. The man who, angry at his boy, waits until the next morning, has discovered a great secret. The power of the wait is almost inconceivable.

The right kind of a father, indeed, has to do very little with his boy. His main business is with himself. If he is accurate in his statements, unprejudiced in his decisions, patient, and has kept his sense of youth, he cannot keep his boy away from him even if he would. The boy wants to know intensely. He is going to find out. If he can't find out at home he is naturally going outside.

But after all, the great thing a father ought to give his boy is health—as much of it as he can carry. The boy is entitled to know how to take care of himself physically: this is what home ought to give him, the means to make him physically fit. If he is a good animal the development of his character will have something solid underneath.

A COMPLETE SYSTEM

"MAY I have a few moments' private conversation?"

The faultlessly dressed gentleman addressed the portly business man standing upon the threshold of his office.

"This is a business proposition, sir," he said, rapidly closing the door and sinking into a seat beside the desk. "I am not a book agent, nor have I any article to sell. I have come to see you about your wife."

"My wife!"

"Yes, sir. Glancing over the society column of your local paper, I am informed that she is about to take her annual trip to Virginia. You will, of course, have to remain behind to take care of your vast business interests. Your wife, sir, is a charming and attractive woman, still in the bloom of youth. Have you, sir, considered the possibilities?"

The other man started to get up, his face red with rage.

"You——" he began.

"One moment, sir, and I think I can satisfy your mind that my motives are pure as alabaster. This

is an age of machinery, of science and invention, and, above all, of efficiency. I am simply carrying this idea of efficiency into the domestic life, which, as you are doubtless aware, is so much more important than the physical. One moment, sir. I can furnish you with the highest credentials. This is purely professional, I can assure you. Will give bond if you so desire. My proposition is this: I will accompany your wife on her trip, always, when travelling, at a respectful distance, you understand, and it will be my pleasure as well as business to amuse and interest her during her stay. I do everything—play tennis, bridge, dance all the latest steps, know the latest jokes, can sing, converse on any subject or remain silent, am a life-saver, can run an auto, flirt discreetly, and, in fact, am the most delightful companion for a wife that you can imagine. Remember, sir, that unless you engage my services your wife is at the mercy of all the strangers she may meet, and, being in that peculiar condition of mind where she is bound to be attracted by things that would otherwise seem commonplace, there is no telling what the end might be. But with me she is perfectly safe. I guarantee results. I insure your heart's happiness against the future. Terms reasonable. I can refer you to——"

In reply the enforced host rose up, and, taking him not too gently by the arm, led him to the door.

"My friend," he said, coldly, "your proposition of safety first doesn't interest me. No, sir! Im sending my wife to Virginia in hopes that she will actually fall in love with somebody else, so I won't have to endure what little I see of her any more, and here you come in to spoil my future. No, sir!"

His visitor turned and faced him with a bright smile.

"My dear sir," he said, "wait. Business man that you are, you do not understand the extent of our resources, which cover every emergency. In accordance with our usual custom, I have already met your wife at a bridge party, and I might say that she is crazy about me. Now, sir, for double the price of my regular fee and a small annual stipend, which is about half the alimony you might have to pay, I will agree to marry and take her off your hands in six months, making you happy for the rest of your life. Sign here, please. Thank you."

THE VISITOR

OPPORTUNITY knocked twice at the man's door and was about to knock a third time when the door was hurriedly opened by a woman.

"Where is the man?" said Opportunity. "Come! I've no time to lose."

"You're the very one he's looking for," said the woman. "But—he's occupied."

"You're his wife, aren't you? Tell him to come."

"He won't believe me. He'll think I'm mistaken. He'll think you are someone else."

"That isn't my fault. I've done my duty. Good-day."

"Oh, please don't go. I'll tell him. I'll try to convince him who you are. Give me a little time."

Just at this moment the man rushed out and grabbed Opportunity. Then he turned roughly to his wife.

"Why didn't you let me know she was knocking?" he said. "Why, she almost got away. Just like *you!*"

FOR THE GIRL YOU LOVE

A GREAT MANY PROMISING YOUNG MEN HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTED IN LOVE. HOW CAN YOU ALWAYS BE SURE OF WINNING THE GIRL? THE FOLLOWING RULES WILL BE FOUND OF INESTIMABLE VALUE

REMEMBER that persistence wins. Call upon her every night, and always be near.

Never bore her. It is better for her to ask why you haven't come than why you have.

Don't be misled by her apparent timidity. The chances are that this is assumed. No matter how much she may seemingly resent it, throw your arms around her every time the impulse moves you and kiss her. Be bold.

Above all things, secure her respect. To achieve this, always show her that you are the soul of courtesy. Let her show unmistakably first that your advances will not be resented. Then, and only then, must you permit yourself to hold her hand. In the long run, this is the best method.

Lavish money upon her. If she is a true woman, she will voluntarily curb you.

Don't get her into the habit of thinking you are Coal Oil Johnny, or afterward, when you are married,

you will discover—but there are some forms of human slavery too pathetic to dwell upon.

Always consult her parents. Thus you avoid future trouble.

Don't be bulldozed by her father and mother. They weren't when they were young, however much they may now wish others to think so.

To secure her best love, remember that you must show her unmistakably that you care for her alone.

Above all things, don't give her the impression that she is the only girl in all the world. This theory has long been exploded. To keep her interested you must keep her surprised.

ON SPENDING ONE'S MONEY

OCCASIONALLY some domestic enthusiast (usually a woman) writes to her paper and explains how a family of six supports itself in abject luxury on four hundred a year.

Ordinary mortals generally read her tables of expenditures with a mingling of despair and disgust, and a kind of horrible fascination, for the subject of spending one's money is bound to be interesting so long as people have to reap as they sow.

Your right-hand neighbour belongs in the class with the lady above. He weighs his coal after it is delivered by a secret process of his own. He writes down the number of feet of gas he burns every month, and can institute an instant comparison with any previous month for years back. He cannot understand why you pay eighty dollars for a suit of clothes when he gets a much better and more stylish effect for one half the money. He is always the kind of a man who has the kind of a wife who not only lives within her allowance (about one third of what your wife finds she cannot manage upon), but saves a portion with which she buys an occasional government bond. As for his children, on from ten to

twenty cents a week pocket money they buy their own bicycles and skates, and all have extensive bank accounts.

Your left-hand neighbour is quite the reverse of all this. Compared with him, the habits of an Indian prince are like those of the late Russell Sage. He sees a motor-car on the street that he likes and immediately calls up the agent and orders one just like it. He buys first editions as one buys watermelons. Ask him to subscribe to anything or to take stock in anything and he is your man. The impression he gives you of his wife is that she is a being so remote from the consideration of how much anything costs as to live in a higher world. His eldest boy—who is, let us say, just turning sixteen—has twenty-five dollars a month for spending money, a motor-car of his own, and has everything charged in the bargain.

As for yourself, you are thoroughly familiar with these two extremes and with all the intermediate human gradations. You meditate and speculate upon them. You know them, but you do not know yourself. Singular, most extraordinary, and hitherto unsuspected impulses suddenly rise within you. Some of your economies are uncanny. Your suspenders may be in shreds, but you shrink passionately from getting another pair, while, merely for the difference of half an inch in the size of the brim, you will buy a

twenty-dollar beaver hat which you wear four times, possibly, in a season. Your wife hesitates for a week over an electric bulb and will bring home in triumph a forty-dollar Paris hat marked down from sixty-five.

Spending one's money is an affair so barometric that it depends upon almost anything—what you have seen the day before, with whom you have talked, what you have eaten, and which way the wind blows. It is also largely a matter of one's worldly imagination. One of two things usually happens to the victim. Either he becomes hopelessly entangled in the habit or else his spending impulses gradually die out and he falls back on his inward resources, content, like the hermit, to sing, "My mind to me a kingdom is."

INDISSOLUBLE PARTNERS

MEMORY and Imagination had a discussion as to which was the greater.

"Without me," said Memory, "your buildings, your fine castles, would all go down. I alone give you power to retain them."

"Without me," said Imagination, "there would be no use of retaining them, for, indeed, they wouldn't be there. I am the great builder."

"And I the great recorder."

"It appears, then, that no one of us is greater than the other. Yet I would not change places with you."

"Why not?" said Memory.

"Because," replied Imagination, "without you I can still keep on creating over and over."

At the end of a year Memory came back.

"What have you done?" asked Memory.

"Nothing," said Imagination.

"And you were wrong when you said that without me you could still go on creating."

"Yes. I did not realize how dependent I was upon you. What have you been doing during the year?"

"Reviewing some old friends. That was all I could do."

"Then we are practically equal."

"Yes. Let us live together hereafter in harmony, carrying on our door this legend:

> There is no Memory without Imagination,
> And no Imagination without Memory.

THE GREAT I AM

I AM the grade-crossing. I spend my time spanning railroad tracks.

I am patience personified. Sometimes I wait for years for one small victim.

But I wait with the consciousness of power, for the law is on my side and many men believe in me. Their trust makes my harvest sure.

I am the grade-crossing, and I laugh raucously to myself as I listen in the dim watches of the night to the tinkle of bells on the cross bars. It pleases me to hear the wanton sound.

Many times they have tolled, but tolled too soon. They should wait.

I love the distant shriek of the locomotive, I love the whirring sound of the wheels, and I love the gay and careless laugh of the pleasant-voiced children as they chatter to the chauffeur.

I love the chauffeur because he dares me. He tries to circumvent me, and succeeds nine times out of ten.

I love him for the tenth time, and as I brood and meditate between funerals I rejoice that I am a grade-crossing.

I croon to myself the song of the Shining Rail and the Dashing Train, and I am satisfied, for even though I occupy a humble sphere, and the great human crowd passes me by indifferently, yet I, too, do my work in the world, and Death delights to do me honour.

A NARROW ESCAPE

HE WENT up to a portly, rather used-looking gentleman in the station and said:

"Excuse me, sir, but are you a married man?"

"I am, sir."

"As I suspected. So am I. You have been married, I should say, about fifteen years."

"About that."

"You are the man, sir, that I have been looking for. I've been married sixteen years. I want to talk to you about woman. I feel that I can put my trust in you. There is a bond of sympathy between us. For years I've had this thing on my mind, but have never dared utter my secret thoughts. Woman, sir, is a characterless creature of impulses. She has no memory for the past and no regard for the future. When by temperament she isn't a money spender, frittering away a man's hard-earned cash on utterly senseless fabrics and gewgaws, she is so mean and prim and utterly small that life in the desert of Sahara compared with her is a pretty fair Paradise. Woman talks, and what does she say? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. The more she talks and the better she

talks the less she says. The truth is, woman knows nothing at first-hand. Between her mind and actual facts there is a soft velvet surface. You know women, I take it?"

"I know one."

"Then you know all, for they are all pretty much alike. Between you and me, I am weary of their endless prattle, of their idle ways, of their assumption of moral fibre which they haven't got, of their interminable hypocrisy. Do your views coincide with mine?"

Two ladies, rather fluffy and prosperous, now approached. They had been chatting. One of them grabbed the rather used-looking man by the arm.

"Do your views coincide with his?" she muttered, suspiciously.

"Never!"

The man who had been unbinding his soul sized up the distance they had come since he began, and, taking a chance, said:

"That, sir, is a great pity. I was just observing, madam, when you came up with my dear wife here, that woman is the loveliest being on earth, whose gentle influence spread over the sons of men has saved the race from utter destruction; whose sweetness breeds eternal virtue, and whose beauty is a constant inspiration. Madam, believe me when I say woman

is the Jewel of Time, the one who, constant to her superb ideals, leads us to better things. When, sir, you have, perchance, been married as long as I have you will come to believe the same thing. We must leave you. Here comes our train."

POPULAR CONCEPTIONS

AS SOME OF US THINK THEY ARE

A BOLSHEVIK is a wild-eyed, black-headed, narrow-chested combination of Russian, Pole, and Hebrew who is always running away from something or killing people on the sly. He never bathes, or brushes his hair, and the moment anything is, he wants to have it abolished.

A Sinn Feiner is a man with Celtic whiskers who spends his time in cellars consorting with Prussians. His object is to overthrow the British Empire. He lives in Dublin, New York, and parts of Milwaukee.

A Chorus Girl is a young woman who never sleeps, and passes most of the time, when not on the stage, in drinking champagne with millionaires. Her age is variously estimated at from sixteen to a hundred and sixty, according to the depth of her make-up.

A Specialist is a man whose principal occupation is robbing people of all the money they have and operating upon them needlessly with instruments specially devised for this purpose. When for various reasons he cannot induce his patients to be operated upon, then he has a sanitarium into which they

are incarcerated and slowly robbed and starved to death.

An Editor is a mean, vindictive creature whose main object in life is to prevent anything intelligent from getting into his paper. To accomplish this he surrounds himself with a few well-known authors long past their usefulness, printing their manuscripts for the sake of their names, while unknown geniuses who send in masterpieces are wholly ignored. All Editors, of course, are under the direct control of the advertising departments.

The Society Woman lies abed drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes every day until noon, when her maid, usually named Marie, knocks gently and says, "Your bath is drawn, madam." She then rises, enters her limousine, and goes shopping, buying several thousand dollars' worth of lingerie and hats. In the afternoon she attends polo games and fêtes, and in the evening spends her time in opera or theatre boxes or playing bridge for large stakes. She is either about to get a divorce, has just obtained one, or is not living with her husband—to whom, however, she always bows politely when they meet in public.

THE RIGHT MAN

"THE salary is twenty-five thousand a year."

Henry Kapps, magnate and the head of one of the largest businesses in the world, sat in his private office interviewing applicants. He had advertised in all the papers, had told his friends, and, in fact, had done everything possible to let the world know the news that there was a twenty-five-thousand-dollar job open on his premises. But the man who had been sitting in front of him got up and shook his head.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said, "but I couldn't fill that job. I'm only a two-thousand man."

The next applicant entered.

"We want a man," said Henry Kapps, "who——"

"Excuse me, sir, but what wages do you pay?"

"Twenty-five thousand a year."

The applicant stared and arose.

"Not for me," he muttered. "I'm not up to that."

One by one, as the fatal sum was mentioned, the applicants disappeared. They knew it was no use. The job was too big for them.

Henry Kapps started to go home.

"It's no use," he muttered. "Plenty of 'em up to four or five thousand a year, but the twenty-five-thousand-dollar job is more than they bargained for. But I must get someone."

Then he thought a moment, stepped into the elevator, went down into the street, turned across the way, entered another building, and made his way up to the fifth floor. He was ushered into another private office similar to his own. He shook hands with an old business friend.

"John," he said, "I'm looking for a chap who can do a certain work for me. The salary is twenty-five thousand dollars a year. Do you know of such a man?"

His friend smiled.

"Strange, Henry, you should have come to me at this moment," he said. "Twenty-five-thousand-dollar men are scarce as hen's teeth, but, as luck will have it, I know a young man—if you can get him—who will fill your requirements. I'll guarantee he's fully worth the money. He's had a remarkable record, and happens to be in the next room now. I'll ask him in."

The young man entered.

"So you are a twenty-five-thousand-dollar man?" said Henry Kapps.

"As a starter," with a smile.

Henry Kapps drew closer. He scanned the face

of the young man closely. He looked as if he was worth the money.

"I've certainly seen you somewhere before," muttered Henry Kapps, bewildered. "You are very familiar to me."

The twenty-five-thousand-dollar man grinned.

"Yes, Mr. Kapps," he said, "you ought to know me. Ten years ago I was your office boy, and you fired me for incompetence."

NOTES ON HEALTH

COMPILED BY A PRACTITIONER OF THE MODERN SCHOOL

HEALTH is necessary to every human being. It enables us to walk and talk, and in many other ways contributes to ease and comfort. Yet how many people realize that it can be had at a slight cost!

Shakespeare has said, "Health is wealth." In the face of this profound utterance, by one of the greatest masters, how can we hesitate?

In a state of health, the eyes of a human being are bright and full of lustre. He walks erect, and his chest moves outward and inward with every breath. He wears a bright smile for all. His complexion is like a young girl's. His flesh is firm. All are glad to meet him.

To be healthy means to be well. A well man is always a healthy one. In true health, a man always has a well look.

DIGESTION

All food is eaten. It should be laid down as a cardinal principle that no food can be digested that

is not first eaten. Food is either eaten with an appetite or without. The appetite is not visible, like the teeth or the stomach, but it is very important, and should be present. If not present, it should be sent for. The teeth are used to chew with. They should be carefully groomed morning, noon, and night. The stomach receives the food, assisted by its network of nerves, which never leave it day or night. These nerves are knitted about the stomach and are supplied by the vasomotor nerve-distributing company. Without them the stomach would fall to the ground. The alimentary canal also assists the stomach, and its canal boats can be seen every day humbly plying their trade and distributing food to the great centres of industry throughout the system.

Food is not only essential to the human system, but it is necessary. Without food we would become anemic, and we could not move about with our accustomed vigour. Food is used everywhere to sustain life, but in some parts more than others. Without food the eyes are downcast, the lips tremble, the legs totter, and the stomach flutters idly in the wind.

What is the best food for man? Opinions differ. Nitrogenous substances, with carbohydrates and fruit salts, fats and leans are recommended for all. Always observe the nitrogen in food you are eating,

and see that it is genuine. Every carbohydrate should also be turned over on its side to see that it is concealing nothing.

The value of water for drinking cannot be overestimated. Always drink water from a glass tumbler, as the psychic effect of water that is seen by the eye as it goes down into the alimentary canal cannot be overestimated.

Water quenches the thirst, and keeps the inside of the body and the vital organs from drying up. When this occurs there is a feeling of suffocation which is unpleasant.

Water contains germs of bacteria, some of which are friendly and others of which are hostile. Before it enters the system every drop of water should be carefully examined, and the hostile germs interned in a place of safety.

EXERCISE

Gentle exercise should be taken every day, that the body may be brought into a healthy glow. The lungs lie in the chest just underneath the epiglottis. They are composed of innumerable cells. A cell is a place where microbes lie concealed, seeking whom they may devour. When the lungs are open to the public all the oxygen atoms come in and are converted, after which they take the subway and travel to various points of interest. When the lungs con-

tract, the walls fall in. Deep breathing is therefore necessary. To deep-breathe, stand on the toes and push the chest upward persistently until it touches the ceiling, where it may rest for a moment. Then let it fall gracefully back to the abdominal region, which is by this time waiting for it with open arms.

While doing this, whistle the Declaration of Independence, and use the deep tones of the voice to bring out the tone qualities which are lying there, waiting to be used.

For bathing use a bath tub, or any body of water. The bath tub should be of porcelain, and the water should flow into it through a faucet. After carefully putting the stopper in, fill the tub with cold water, into which throw a few cakes of ice to give it body. Nothing so invigorates the vasomotor system as a lump of ice bobbing up and down your spine.

Swiftly remove your fur-lined overcoat and step lightly and blithely into the bath, singing as you go. Toss about in the invigorating water for a few moments, flinging it over your shoulder and letting it flow in health-giving rivulets down your back.

To dry yourself use a rough towel. This can be obtained at any hardware store.

Once a week take a hot bath. The skin should first be parboiled in the hot water and then carefully removed, and with it all impurities that have collected.

Soap is useful for the hot bath. Emery soap is best, and should be applied by hand. Never reverse the movement, which should be in circles to the right. Emery soap is made of equal parts of emery and soap. Examine the emery very carefully before using, to see that it has not deteriorated.

A brisk walk in the fresh air should be taken daily. If there is no fresh air, it can be obtained in cans at any reliable drug store.

Many of my patients, when beginning my system, are troubled with cold feet. The feet are useful, and should be carefully nurtured. If you are not married, and your feet grow cold, put them in a medium oven for fifteen minutes, then plunge them in an ice-cream freezer. This restores the circulation in a marvellous way.

HANDS DOWN

AFFECTING INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF A GENTLEMAN WHO WAS ACQUAINTED WITH A CERTAIN WIDOW

I HAD called upon the widow with the intention of proposing, but there was another man there already. I wondered if he had come for the same purpose. He was a small man, somewhat discreetly overdressed, and talked well about nothing in particular. I think he divined my purpose, for he rose to go. The widow, however, detained him. At the moment I could not make out whether it was because she wished to ward off my proposal or because there was a chance of his proposing also—if she could prevail upon him to remain until after I had gone.

The other man, however, suddenly proved himself to be an extraordinary creature, for he plunged into the affair with a courage and lack of taste that, to my modest mind, was appalling.

"I am in love with Mrs. Coburt," he said. "Are you? I was just about to make my proposal when you entered."

"I have no objection to withdrawing if you wish it," I said, coldly.

Our charming quarry here intervened. "The

fact is, my dear friends," she said, "that I am sure I shall never be able to make up my mind between you. Now, we are all mature. Let us be quite honest, and look at this matter with discernment."

"We might settle it by arbitration," I suggested, feeling more at ease. "But the great question to be settled, after all, is the happiness of the greatest number. Let us, with, I hope, becoming gallantry, leave ourselves entirely out of the problem. Which would you, my dear Sarah, be happier with, and your reasons? Or would it be better for you to go on just as you are?"

"I should undoubtedly be happier with some man about the house."

"Then that part of the problem is settled," I replied, my rival evidently not being particularly edified by the manner in which I was monopolizing the conversation—considering that he had started it. "As to which one," I added, "that is a matter for a test."

"How so?" Here interposed Mr. Spoke.

"I propose," I said, turning to the widow, "that the one who during one evening entertains you to your greater satisfaction shall win you. The world is before us. And you yourself shall be the judge."

Three evenings later we met for the lady's decision.

"Mr. Spoke," said the widow, turning to my rival

with a sweet smile, "you certainly did give me a lovely time. Yes, dear," she said to me, "he was quite adorable. We had a charming dinner, consisting of all the things I delight in. The play we saw was admirably chosen. The cabaret afterward was screamingly good."

"Then I win," said Spoke, expansively.

"No, you lose," said the widow, nestling her hand in mine.

"What did you do?" he asked me, rather savagely, I thought.

"Oh," I replied, carelessly, "I stayed here quietly with Sarah and listened with the most intense interest to her wonderful analysis of the character, ideals, and multifarious virtues of the most remarkable man I ever knew—that is, by proxy."

"And who was he?" said Spoke, his eye on his coat.

"Her first husband," I replied, nonchalantly.

LOOKING BACKWARD ON THE HOME

IN THE YEAR 3000 A. D.

"THIS, young lads and dames," said the future state guardian of the young, as he showed his charges into the right wing of the coming museum, "is a replica of *The Home*, as our ancestors knew it."

"What are those stupid-looking people who are sitting there so quietly?" said child No. 917.

"That was the typical family of the day, including the father, the mother, and four offsprings, two male and two female. The father, as you see, is reading from an ancient book called the Bible, which was at one time read and believed in by quite a number of people."

"Is that all that father did?"

"Oh, no. He ruled over all the household in his austere and dignified way—that is, all except mother and the hired girl and the children. Also, father earned the money whereby the Home was run. That, I may say, was why he was considered so important."

"And did mother do nothing?" breathlessly asked child No. 918, a charming little girl of eight. "Wasn't

she a lawyer, or a statesman, or a director, or a Soviette, or a flying delegate—or anything?"

"No," said the inspector. "The period you refer to came just a little later. She was then only just—mother. Being confined almost exclusively to the Home, she frittered away her time in a species of personal debasement called dusting and sweeping, mending, cooking, and teaching her offspring to kneel and pray, an ancient practice resorted to by these delightfully absurd innocents."

"We should not be too hard upon them," observed Lad No. 919. "Many of the poor wretches lived in the country where they were surrounded by things called trees. At that time there were not only trees which they used for fuel and a process they called education, but there was also a substance called coal from which they obtained heat, instead of directly from the sun, as at present. They also believed in a being called God, the Historical Formula which is now, at the beginning of every century, prepared in advance by a few cabinet officers, not then having been invented. But tell me, Paw Paw, who were the ingenious minds among our ancestors, who first conceived the idea of getting rid of this ridiculous thing called the Home?"

"Like all great advances which occurred before the management of the Universe was discovered by a Kansas man, who had flunked at Harvard, to lie in

a historical formula which he invented, the realization that the Home was superfluous came about gradually. The cities were, no doubt, responsible for it, and there seems to be evidence to support the belief that the movement to get rid of the Home originated in a place called New York, a small island filled with flivvers, limousines, and profiteers, and entirely surrounded by a hostile chemical reaction called politics."

"But, Paw Paw," said No. 921, "did not our ancestors pride themselves on their inventions?"

This made Paw Paw smile.

"To show how crude they were," he replied, "it is only necessary to state that in order to communicate with one another, they actually strung copper wires all over the country, and when both Mars and Venus were wig-wagging them frantically, it took them several years before they even noticed it or could reply. Nevertheless, children, you must not despise this family group as it is set in the home that once was. Without it we might never have been here."

At this No. 920, perhaps the brightest and most intelligent youth of them all, laughed.

"Nonsense, Paw Paw," he said. "My prehistoric ancestors came from a place called Boston, and in the course of time almost any one of us would have been able to evolve a working cosmos out of our consciousness with a human race or so on the side."

"Maybe so," said Paw Paw. "But now, children, you must move along. Here come a lot of disembodied spirits who are out for the afternoon, and you mustn't mingle with them, as they come from the Middle West; and you know we beings of the Atlantic Coast must keep up our dignity."

As they floated out of the Museum, a voice called:

"Buy the Hourly Radiograph! All the latest news from Jupiter, Mars, Venus, and the minor planets. Price only one thousand dollars."

SO RUNS THE WORLD AWAY

A FORTUNE was once lying around loose. It had been in that spot for a long time, and nobody saw it.

Crowds passed, but they overlooked it.

"I wonder," said the fortune, "if anybody will ever notice me."

A beggar came along with a tin cup and a three-cornered stool. He sat down by the fortune and appealed to the crowd.

Two lovers strolled by.

"We shall have to wait," said one lover, despondently, "until——"

A poet came along. He had true vision—a universal eye. He saw the fortune immediately.

"Poor thing," he said, turning it over with his foot, "one has no time for you."

Later came a young stranger, who grabbed the fortune, and, putting it carefully under his arm, walked off.

Years later he came back to that spot and said reminiscently to the fortune, now grown so big that nobody would have recognized it:

"Yes, here is the place where I found you first."

"And to think," said the fortune, "that you, of all men, should have seen me—you, with no quality save a commercial instinct."

His owner smiled.

"I didn't see you," he said. "A poet called my attention to you."

TO ERR IS WOMAN

WHEN the husband returned unexpectedly from his journey, he saw his best friend going out of the back door with his wife.

"You came too soon," said his best friend. "You should have waited. We did not look for you."

"I heard," said the husband, "that there was another man making love to my wife here, and I hurried home for the purpose of dealing with him."

"You forgot," said his best friend, "that I was here to protect you. Knowing that the other man was making love to her, I was forced to cut him out."

"And you succeeded?"

"Certainly. Am I not your best friend?"

The husband reflected for some time. At last he said:

"Yes, I see. As long as my wife is this kind of a woman, she would eventually have gone off with someone, anyway. And as my best friend, you thought it was better that it should be done right."

"Exactly."

The husband turned to his wife.

"Is this true?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Well, that being the case, you may go."

At this the best friend smiled.

"The real trouble with you," he said to the wife, "is that you didn't make love to me first. Then you wouldn't have had to go."

SOME HISTORIC BLURBS

AS THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN WRITTEN IF THE AUTHORS HAD BEEN ALIVE TO-DAY

TO SAY that Moses' *Ten Commandments* grip you in a way that you have never felt before is putting it so mildly that we blush with shame at our feebleness of expression. In a few short, crisp sentences, every word of which puts you on your toes, this master hand makes you stand aghast at your own imperfections. But he does it in such a simple, unaffected way that there is no sting to it. You can read this soul-stirring message in a few minutes, yet it lingers with you for some hours. "I sat up half the night thinking of it," said our first reader.

In the *Iliad* (released October 1st) Homer has done the seemingly impossible thing. He has outclassed himself. How Achilles blew up at the right moment, and put it over on the rest of the tribe, and all on account of the loveliest girl that ever came down the great white way, is told with a vividness that makes this a masterpiece of real literature. You can actually see and feel all the characters, and the colour scheme of the suburbs of Troy is portrayed with a

fidelity to Nature that Arnold Bennett never approached. From the thrilling moment when Achilles is grabbed by the heel the interest mounts until the reader is left breathless. When our head stenographer first read the manuscript of this absorbing love story she fainted away three times in rapid succession. Need we say more?

The Inferno, by Dante. Light works of fiction, in which the richest humour mingles with the most delicate play of fancy, are so rare that when one comes our way we feel that it must be heralded to the world in strong language. This delightful and absorbing creation of family life below stairs, which might so easily have been vulgarized, is rendered with such inimitable art as to carry one along irresistibly to the final dénouement. It has a subtle warmth of treatment that lifts it up to the high-water mark of literary art. A real hearty laugh in every line.

Julius Caesar's *Commentaries*, already in its tenth edition, although it has not yet been issued, is a book of such stirring adventure that no boy who's fond of death in every form can afford to be without it. Every sentence lashes you into tense excitement. As war correspondent and general, the author was personally present at every scene he depicts with such rare skill, and no matter where he is at the crucial moment, fording the Rubicon or penetrating Gaul,

you actually feel that he has been there. He has written his masterpiece over four times in order that every sentence may get home to the youth of our land with the least pain. The plot, while almost bare in its simplicity, is sufficient for the great purpose of the soul-stirring author. Every boy will drink in its contents with a succession of gasps.

Faust, by Goethe. When the author of this great uncovering of the wellsprings of human motives left his manuscript on our desk, we heedlessly allowed it to remain there for several days without a thought of its marvellous message. The first page so fascinated us, however, when we finally got at it, that in spite of our income-tax report, we read it through from start to finish without a break. This book, in which the hero, although unmarried, unhesitatingly puts himself on a bargain counter, is one that no home can afford to be without.

CONFESSIONS OF A HAPPILY MARRIED MAN

IT TAKES my wife a long time to read anything. I skim whole pages instantly. She hates to be read aloud to. I love it.

When we travel I always suggest to her in advance the car we shall take. She agrees, but will suddenly change her mind and insist upon taking another one. I grumble to myself and obey. She likes the top of the auto up. I loathe it up. It remains up.

I always praise her golf, no matter how badly she plays. She always deprecates mine, no matter how well I play. When I criticize anything she does I don't say it. I think it. That sometimes makes trouble enough.

I compliment her occasionally before others. She pretends that she doesn't understand why I do it.

When I buy a new suit she will never admit that she admires it until it is worn out. Then she says the next one isn't half so becoming as the last. When she gets a new gown I admire it intensely until it is about time to replace it with another. She never liked any hat that I have ever bought. I like every one of hers—on principle.

I laugh at her when she gets too serious. When I get too serious she scolds me.

I keep her informed about my business only when she asks me. She never asks me.

I tell her a funny story every day. If I have two, I keep one for the next day. Sometimes she laughs at them.

She asks me occasionally if I think her hair is as long as it was. I always tell her it is longer.

I hate bridge, dinner parties, dancing, and the opera. She respects my opinion and makes me do them all.

She makes out checks and forgets to enter them on the stubs. Every time I catch her in this omission she reminds me of the celebrated occasion when I left the tickets to a large theatre party in my other suit.

She always keeps her temper when I lose mine. I keep mine when she loses hers.

I once told her she was thoroughly spoiled. She kissed me and said she knew it. Well, why not?

(FINIS)

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